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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: As of 13 March 1991, Moscow Domestic Radio sourcelines in the DAILY REPORT will reflect how a station identifies itself. This change eliminates the "Domestic Service" designation in favor of the station identification as broadcast. The presence of a new radio sourceline reflects this change in policy, rather than the establishment of a new station or network.

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Pact, NATO Experts Hold Plenary Meeting

LD0703205491 Moscow TASS in English 1718 GMT 7 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Smelov]

[Text] Vienna March 7 TASS—By ratifying the treaty on the final settlement of the German issue, the Soviet Union has greatly contributed to developing cooperation in Europe to the future, head of the German delegation at conventional arms in Europe talks Ruediger Hartmann told a news conference here today.

The news conference was held after a plenary meeting of the joint consultative group of Warsaw Treaty and NATO experts, discussing the implementation of the conventional arms in Europe treaty.

Hartmann said the document is the main pier for the architecture of a new Europe aimed for cooperation.

Hartmann said the exchange of specified military data on the armed forces of the 22 member-states of the two blocs within the consultative group was useful. He said there remained certain differences, but partners were trying to reach a consensus.

There are problems with placing three Soviet motorised infantry divisions under the command of the coast guard. Some delegations believe that by doing so, Moscow has violated its obligations on the treaty.

The Soviet side said this was done in 1989, i.e. a year before the treaty was signed, and it did not aim to violate the treaty. At the time, the issue of taking marines into account or exchanging such information had not been raised.

In addition, placing the divisions under the other command was a forced measure. After the Soviet Union considerably reduced its land forces' potential, NATO gained superiority in strike and mobile naval means. The Soviet Union was forced to protect coastal areas.

The Soviet Union said the coastal guard, like marines, is included in the navy, which is not being discussed at the Vienna talks.

Missile Site Visited; Yazov Program Announced

LD1003180791

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian at 1530 GMT on 10 March, in its regular "Vremya" newscast, broadcasts a 2-minute recorded video report by Igor Fesunenko on his visit to an undisclosed strategic missile regiment command post. Reception is fair.

Fesunenko says: "From here, from these control desks, by pushing the relevant buttons and turning the relevant keys, the most powerful and most terrible weapon ever invented by man—the intercontinental strategic missile, able to strike any goal at any point on earth—can be brought into action." The video shows Fesunenko pointing to a desk with five visible red buttons, three of which read: Information not received; Main; Reserve; and three boxes with keyholes, two of which read: Command; Launch.

Also shown are officers on duty, and various unexplained pieces of equipment, a door with danger signs, plaques reading Combat Post 1 and Combat Post 2. Fesunenko explains that officers are on duty permanently in order to ensure that the missiles are never launched, though naturally these officers are constantly changed, he points out. The video shows two officers, and then switches to a long low corridor.

Fesunenko suggests that viewers will want to know whether or not the missiles could be mistakenly launched. Fesunenko says: "You can learn the answer to that question and to many other questions, including any questions connected with our armed forcecs, in the next 'Who is Who' program, to be broadcast on 30 March—naturally on the first program—when the guest will be Marshal of the Soviet Union Yazov, USSR minister of defense. Please send in any questions which interest you, adressed to Marshal Yazov for this program, at 127000 Moscow, ul Akademika Koroleva 12."

Shevardnadze Interviewed on Association Goals

LD1103112791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0923 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 11 Mar (TASS)—We transmit the full text of the replies of the president of the Foreign Policy Association, former USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, to questions put to him by a TASS diplomatic correspondent.

[TASS] Eduard Amvrosiyevich, you will soon be setting out on your first foreign trip in your new capacity as president of the Foreign Policy Association - to Italy and the Vatican. Is this visit prompted by your personal relations with the leaders of those states, or by the beginning of your consultations with European politicians?

[Shevardnadze] It so happens that a collection of my speeches and articles has been published in Italy, and there is to be a ceremony to introduce the book to readers, in which the author will take part.

I received an invitation to go to Italy for two or three days to cooperate with the publishers. I've also been invited to address an Italian audience. I responded to the idea of the lecture with great interest. Major events have occurred in the world: the Gulf crisis has been resolved and a new situation has developed in that region and in the world as a whole.

I may have ceased to be a minister, but I have not stopped thinking about how to make our world better and safer. And now I am also obliged to think about it as president of the Foreign Policy Association.

To some extent the Italian trip is the beginning of the work of our recently-founded association.

[TASS] What is the practical work of the assocation based on? What sort of machinery do you have for interacting with the USSR Foreign Ministry and the other organizations which participate in shaping our foreign policy?

[Shevardnadze] Cooperation with all who profess the principles of the new political thinking. We are not in any way setting up in opposition to the USSR Foreign Ministry. On the contrary, we want to help the ministry by producing alternative versions of various actions which can serve as a basis for consultation. We shall behave in the same way with other departments involved in foreign policy.

Our aim is to provide independent expert assessment of policy options. The association will not have a numerous "creative" staff. We will be bringing together young academics, specialists, diplomats, cultural figures, economists and businessmen, to work on specific topics.

We intend to concentrate on cooperation with the republics, krays, oblasts and cities, all of which have a need to establish various contacts with other countries, with foreign partners. Skilled advice about this, and precise recommendations, will help them to enter the difficult sphere of links between nations and states worthily and with greater confidence.

We'd like to think that the research projects of our association will be of a quality equal to world standards in the various fields.

[TASS] When you were answering questions from journalists, you said you will not keep silent if, in your opinion, signs appear of a retreat from the policy of the new thinking. How, in your view, will the association influence the decisionmaking process?

[Shevardnadze] No, we will not keep silent. We will, for example, defend the Foreign Ministry and the actions of the Soviet embasssies when they act in the spirit of the new thinking.

Our foreign policy does have its critics, as you know. We shall argue with them in a proper and reasoned manner.

Whether they will listen to us is another matter. If we speak convincingly, they will begin to take notice—both in society and in the state structures.

[TASS] You enjoy great prestige and respect in our country and abroad. What are the objective and subjective prerequisites on which that attitude to you is based?

[Shevardnadze] Believe me, I have never done anything special for effect. If my colleagues are fairly well-disposed towards me, I am not the best person to ask about the reasons.

'World This Week' Program on Near East, Germany

LD1003185591 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1230 GMT 10 Mar 91

["The World This Week: International Review" program with Vitaliy Yakovlevich Chukseyev, member of the TASS Collegium and editor in chief of TASS foreign information; Vsevolod Ivanovich Sovva, deputy head of the USSR Foreign Ministry Information Directorate; and Vladimir Georgiyevich Pasko, All-Union Radio foreign policy commentator]

[Excerpts] [Pasko] Hello, comrades! As usual, we single out the most important events of the past week on our program, and I would draw your attention above all to the USSR Supreme Soviet's ratification of the Soviet-German Treaty, the first visit by the new British Prime Minister Major to Moscow, and of course, the vigorous political consultations on the situation in the Persian Gulf and the Near East. [passage omitted]

[Chukseyev] One gets the impression that in the eyes of the U.S. Administration, the military factor will have a decisive role to play in the Near East. Last week, at a joint session of Congress, President Bush set out the U.S. plan for the Near East. Here is its first and fundamental element: the creation of a joint system in the region, in which—and I am quoting Bush—our friends and allies in the Near East would bear primary responsibility for regional security. The United States is itself prepared to make a contribution to safeguarding security in the region; however, not by maintaining a permanent presence of ground forces on the Arabian Peninsula, but by taking part in joint ground and air forces maneuvers, and by maintaining a capable U.S. naval presence.

I would like to dwell in rather more detail on this point of the plan, since it is being received by the Arab countries with less than enthusiasm. According to the U.S. press, quoting an administration official, the United States wants to maintain a military presence rather greater than that prior to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The plans provide for the rotation of thousands of U.S. servicemen through the territory of Saudi Arabia. The troops would remain there for a few months and then rotate. There would be wide-scale maneuvers by the paratroops on the Arabian Peninsula.

Furthermore, the plan is to deploy squadrons of U.S. war-planes at bases in the Persian Gulf for similar lengths of time. According to the same administration official, a large quantity of military material will be delivered to Saudi Arabia in order to ensure that U.S. combat units could rapidly return there in the event of a crisis. The naval presence will also be built up. That is one of the tasks which Secretary of State Baker is to tackle in the course of his trip.

[Pasko] Incidentally, Vitaliy Yakovlevich, even the U.S. press has been remarking that this task will be fraught with difficulties. Mention is made of the decision by a conference held in Damascus, of Syria, Egypt, and the Arab countries of the Persian Gulf, whose leaders have decided to set up their own forces to maintain peace in the region. As it happens, this runs counter to...

[Chukseyev interrupting] Quite right. Yes. In their Damascus declaration they have been speaking about the need to set up an inter-Arab rather than an international force. [passage omitted]

It is interesting that some political observers have been trying to show that the Soviet Union has no business in the Near East settlement process, since it allegedly stood on the sidelines. The Americans have a plurality of views, just as we do, but—for obvious reasons—I am most interested in the official administration point of view.

During an interview on NBC last Sunday, Secretary of State Baker was asked, with ingenuous American directness and simplicity, whether Gorbachev or the Soviets were a major player in the Near East now that the war is over. The secretary of state was equally frank in his response. I quote: It could continue to play a very important political role. I do not believe we could have done what we did, in the way we did it, and in the time we took to do it, if the Soviet Union had not stood shoulder to shoulder with us for most of that time. Baker rounded out thus: Therefore, in my opinion, it would be a mistake to give out any signals to the effect that the Soviet Union should not take part in the consultations to devise a future security structure. It should take part.

[Pasko] Vitaliy Yakovlevich, the discussion taking place in America is, incidentally, not dissimilar to that in our society. Some people in this country have a feeling that in recent times we have lost the initiative and our influence. But to what extent does that accord with reality? I do not want to cite prestigious Western politicians, but here is just one example: Major—all right, not on his first but his second foreign trip—but where does he go? Moscow!

[Chukseyev] And then the Near East.

[Pasko] And then the Near East. Or Secretary of State Baker: first of all he goes to the Near East, but then—before his important meeting with the leaders of Western states—he again meets the Soviet leadership. Those are just a couple of examples. There are others. Vsevolod Ivanovich, how many times has comrade Belonogov gone to that region and neighboring countries? He has just returned from Iran! We are playing a very vigorous part in all the consultations, and without our participation they would not be very productive.

[Sovva] One could also point out that the telephone calls by our president to the leaders of a number of the world's leading countries have made, and are still making, a great contribution to this enormous and very labor intensive cause. Suffice it to say that, when speaking to Chancellor Kohl on European issues and our bilateral relations, the president paid great attention to discussing the question of the Near East and the role to be played by our states in that respect. It should be said that political imagination is working very hard at the moment. There are no ready-made recipes, because it is not just the rebuilding of Kuwait or the maintenance of Iraq's state integrity, but many other problems which are waiting to be resolved. There is the Palestinian problem and Lebanon; all these have to be tackled. They need to have sufficient time allotted to them and need quite a lot of effort to be devoted to them in order to ensure that some very serious political conclusions are drawn from the military disaster that has occurred in the region. [passage omitted]

[Chukseyev] Calls for the Palestinian problem to be resolved or the conflict between Israel and the Arab countries to be settled are to be heard at various forums in various forms. Naturally enough one starts to wonder: what about Israel? What is its stance? For this is a country which, as the recent war has shown, is particularly in need of peace and stability in the Near East. It is desperately in need of peace. An answer to this question is partly to be found in the talks held last week between Hurd and Levi, the foreign ministers of Great Britain and Israel, respectively. Speaking to journalists, the Israeli minister maintained that there is an expectionally favorable climate for peace in the Near East at the moment. At the same time, he ruled out any possibility of talks with the PLO, which, as he put it, continues to be committed to terrorism. In other words, the same old stance—even the same old terminology. Instead, he suggested abbreviated autonomy. Of course, Mr. Levi is against any international peace conference.

[Pasko] Of course, it has to be said that the Israeli leadership is essentially out of step with the overwhelming majority of members of the world community. As I see it, Israel is also out of step on the question of the role of the United Nations. After all, the majority of countries are stressing the role to be played by the United Nations in a Near East settlement. On the subject of the various countries' overall stances, one cannot help noticing the following: for perhaps the first time ever, the countries have started speaking as loudly as possible about the need to stop the supply of weapons to the Near East. About how intolerable it would be to have the means of mass annihilation delivered there. The interesting thing is that the United States has started speaking about this now.

[Chukseyev] Yes, that is one of the points in the Bush plan.

[Pasko] Yes, but one gets the impression that, when they speak of this, the United States is looking in Iraq's direction and in the direction of the Soviet Union - to get the Soviet Union to limit its supply to Iraq. But what about Israel? As yet Israel has not been mentioned, but essentially that is what it is all about.

[Sovva] Vladimir Georgiyevich, Israel has been mentioned. I have in front of me a computation—a careful calculation of who has supplied how much weaponry and hardware to whom in the Near East in the past few years. We are well down the list. Not surprisingly, since many frontranking countries—many, I repeat—have supplied all sorts of states with modern military hardware. When we see this list, then of course we start thinking that the same sort of thing must not happen in the future. It would appear that the United States is pursuing a similar approach. I agree tha this is an element in the President's plan mentioned by Vitaliy Yakovlevich. But at the same time, there are vigorous demands that Israel should be supplied with the U.S. manufactured Patriot missile and the German manufactured Roland—in other words, missiles of the type which to some extent safeguarded Israel during the war. If the emotional rather than the rational approach predominates, I believe that there will be a very intense battle here.

[Chukseyev] You know, it is not just Israel. Clearly this state-of-the-art hardware has made such an impression on some Arab countries that they are actively engaged in seeking to purchase various types of weapons, guidance systems, missiles, et cetera in the immediate future. So far as I can judge from U.S. press reports, the Americans are prepared to supply these weapons, and thus to maintain the Near East as a store-room for this modern military hardware, if you like.

[Pasko] Incidentally, there have been reports that the United States has decided to supply this modern hardware to Egypt. Is this good or bad? I believe that, when all is said and done, this is bad. Because it all leads to a super-saturation of weapons. Yet just look: the Japanese have advocated a lower arms level in the Near East; the Germans want a lower level in the Near East; so do we, and a lot of other countries.

[Sovva] Well, the military tunes are of course muffling the symphonies of a peaceful kind, and this is sad. This is obviously caused by the euphoria which arose after the war. Particularly because everything that has been used—the ammunition, missiles, and other equipment—naturally has to be replaced now. General Norman Schwarzkopf is now naturally going to report on all the merits and shortcomings of the equipment, and new weapons are going to be made, and this tendency can certainly play its own negative part. We must now make it a point to seek peace, seeking a universal and regional peace and tranquility. In this sense, having ratified the agreement with Germany, and having drawn a line under a very considerable period in history—particularly because on 22 June it will be 50 years since the day of the aggressive and treacherous attack of Hitler's Germany on the Soviet Union—we have now given a powerful stimulus to the movement for peace. I think that our Supreme Soviet, our Parliament, having discussed this complex package of agreements in detail, has made a truly historic decision.

[Chukseyev] You know, in Bonn they waited with particular impatience for the results of the discussion on these treaties. Immediately after the message arrived that they had been ratified, Chancellor Kohl, talking to journalists, characterised this message as one of hope and peace for all Europe. Now there are all reasons to hope, he said, that the German people and the peoples of the Soviet Union will be able to build their future relations as good neighbors and partners.

[Pasko] You know, talking of ratification of these treaties, the following is to my mind worth mentioning. Each of these treaties is a logical reaction to the enormous complex of issues which have been posed by the unification of Germany. It is well known that the attitude in our society, and not only here, is not unequivocal. The unification caused a cautious reaction in many. These treaties are in fact eliminating the grounds for worry. What happened? Germany pledged itself to guarantee that peace, and only peace, will now emanate from German soil. That its policy will form an organic part of the new structure of security and cooperation in Europe. The article of the treaties on the final character of the present German borders, and its refusal to make any territorial claims is indeed of crucial importance. So is the whole sum of its military-political obligations, which includes them not producing or acquiring nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.

It is rather appropriate to recall these points, particularly from the point of view of what these treaties give us, the

Soviet Union and the Soviet people. As the USSR Supreme Soviet registered in its declaration, the treaties ratified are in agreement with the national and state interests of the Soviet Union. One more point: It is well known that the West is very closely following the processes in our country. These processes are associated with the success of our reforms, while these reforms are associated with the stability of our course toward perestroyka in international relations. In this sense, by ratifying the Soviet-German treaties, the USSR Supreme Soviet has confirmed the course of the Soviet Union toward building new international relations on the European continent. This is how this event is being perceived abroad.

[Sovva] Well, I know the mood of journalists in Germany, and, during the period of the preparation, signing, and ratification of the package of agreements, have visited the German land several times. And I can see another important circumstance: It is the turn in the minds and hearts of the Germans, caused by the attitude of the Soviet Union to the German settlement. This is going to be felt for a long time to come. One can say that this quality, I would say, of the Soviet people's generous soul is behind every line of the documents which have been signed. Indeed, a line is being drawn under a very long and unpleasant period in the life of two large states—and some people refer to Germany now as a power, with a potential which is going to grow. I am talking of its peaceful economic, academic, technological, and cultural potential.

Such is the attitude of the Soviet people who suffered a lot under what was not some abstract Germans, but the Germans who were brought here by Hitler's military machine—the attitude of the Soviet people, I would say, is a kind of forgiveness, if you like, if we are to use an almost religious language. All this is reflected in these agreements. The opening of such a way to mutual understanding and mutual communication must prevail. I think, over some deliberations of a financial character. We need these too, but I can see that a complex hard currency situation in our country makes some of the critics of the agreement say: Why 15 billion and not 30 or 45 billion [currency not specified]. I think that the question of these sums is not yet in fact finally settled. Because two agreements on the presence of our troops and on certain issues which follow from the transitional measures will still be subjected to specific talks.

I would like to remind you in particular that immediately before the ratification, important discussions took place in Bonn at the level of deputy ministers of our two countries involving compensation for the Soviet citizens who suffered during the war. And Bonn's attitude to this matter is quite constructive and promising.

[Pasko] By the way, the FRG foreign minister is also coming to us soon. Our relations with that country are shaping up quite well. As they are, actually, with most other states. In the very beginning we talked of the visit to Moscow of the new British prime minister, Major. The purpose of his visit was to confirm the continuity of Britain's policy of improving relations with the Soviet Union. It is a point of crucial significance, not only from the point of view of bilateral relations, but also international relations as a whole.

The world, as the Persian crisis has demonstrated once again, is interdependent. This means that each country's policy must take into consideration the interests of others. Soon after his visit to the Near East, U.S. State Secretary Baker is coming here. A meeting between comrade Grobachev and Ozal, the president of Turkey, is scheduled for tomorrow. In the final analysis, all these meetings are intended to define a precise balance of the sides; interests with regard to their attitude to various world issues. The balance which the world must comply with in order to protect itself from crises similar to the one we have just witnessed. Well comrades, here let me close today's meeting. Goodbye.

United States & Canada

Post-Gulf U.S.-Soviet Relations Viewed

PM1003174591 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 9 Mar 91 Second Edition p 5

[Article by political observer Tomas Kolesnichenko under the "View from Moscow" rubric: "Which Way Is the Wind of Change Blowing?"]

[Text] "The new world order's first test is over." Those were the words of President Bush, and it is very noteworthy that he used them in an address to the U.S. Armed Forces in the Persian Gulf.

Such is life. The principles of the new order—a world without wars, aggression, or the use of force—have had to be established by fire and sword. One side lost a few dozen men, the other—tens of thousands. Perhaps that is why the victory fanfares cannot drown out the sense of bitterness...

No one evaded the moment of truth in the Arabian Peninsula. S. Husayn tested his fate, dictatorship, and, probably, the will of Allah; the Arabs their unity; Israel its restraint; the coalition—new weapons, but the main test befell the USSR and the United States. Because it was they who, having only just bid farewell to the cold war, found themselves facing a complex situation in the Persian Gulf. It is hard even to imagine what would have happened if this crisis had occurred five years earlier, for example. The world would have been on the brink of nuclear catastrophe. That is why I think that few people will now cast stones at the "new thinking," the materialization of which prevented a regional crisis from developing into a global conflict.

Speaking of stones, now is the time to gather them up. Yes, the new world order has undergone only its first test. The war showed that Moscow and Washington, despite their natural difference of interests, can cooperate for the sake of the goals that have been set. Meanwhile another question arises: What form will Soviet-U.S. relations take outside crisis situations? Will their still fragile mutual understanding acquire a stable, long-term basis, or will the winds of change once more blow Washington and Moscow far in different directions?

At least two factors have been brought into play here, in my view. Will Washington itself pass the test of victory, will that victory not go to some people's heads over there? And the second factor—how will events develop in our country? These two factors are closely interlinked and influence the general situation, transforming what seem to be purely "domestic" affairs into global problems.

So what is happening in the United States? First and foremost, the country has finally rid itself of the so-called "Vietnam syndrome." In any event this is what Bush has been persistently saying (for the umpteenth time) recently, and other politicians and the press have been echoing him. "It seems as though the whole burden of Vietnam has been lifted from everyone's shoulders. Americans have gotten their pride back," Clayton Yeutter, the new chairman of the Republican National Committee, stated exultantly.

However, it would be an extreme oversimplification to interpret the "Vietnam syndrome" merely as a sense of bitterness and shame at an ancient defeat in Indochina, and the purging of it as nothing more than revenge in a swift and victorious war in the desert.

It is all far more complex than that. After that war the United States was, so to speak, put in its place, historically speaking. It became clear at that time that there was no longer a single superpower in the world which could decide the destiny of other peoples as the mood so took it. Or (and this is even more important) that this superpower itself enjoyed invulnerable security and limitless military superiority. The Americans' favorite saying—"we are number one, you are number two"—was forgotten for many years.

Inside the country, the prestige of the Pentagon and U.S. weaponry was badly hit. "Vietnam," well-known U.S. political scientist B. Morton wrote, "produced a generation which saw the United States as a power in decline, with ineffective armed forces. But now we can go to the other extreme and view ourselves as a world policeman ready to do battle everywhere."

The temptation is, indeed, great. Both politically and militarily. As head of the international coalition of 29 countries, although the Security Council made no decision to that effect, the United States has again tasted leadership, the "burden" which history is returning to it. After all, during the war the fate of the region was decided not by the United Nations but by America and its president. The mood of festive euphoria has now seized quite a few people in America who believe that they should go on dictating their terms both in the region and around the world.

America's state-of-the-art, 21st century high-technology weaponry also had a great effect. Thanks to that weaponry, the war for one side was like a push-button electronic computer game while for the other side it meant scorched earth. But the best is yet to come. According to the journal FOREIGN POLICY, the Pentagon is now improving its "conventional" weapons—combining extremely long range, high accuracy, and far greater explosive power than all the weapons in existence today. Such weapons will be able to destroy, for example, up to one division of tanks with a single shot. This is about 10 years away, but even now many of the coalition members, including Arab countries, have asked for U.S. weapons.

Here is another conclusion. You may agree with it or not but it is a firm part of the Western assessments of the war's results. Britain's SUNDAY TIMES, for example, bluntly writes that the conflict "exposed the clear inferiority of the Soviet combat hardware used by the Iraqi army."

The position of the administration and the President himself plays a major role among domestic political factors in the United States. The events in the Persian Gulf earned the President unprecedented personal popularity, and 90 percent of Americans now like what he is doing. No U.S. President has had such a rating since the victory in 1945. Observers believe that Bush has done much to secure himself a second term in the White House. This point should be noted, because the "election" factor in America usually makes a deep impression on the policy of the incumbent President, ties his hands, and sometimes makes him take patently populist steps. Bush is now spared that.

The main question is: How will all these factors affect Soviet-U.S. relations, will they be reviewed, and if so in what way.

By all accounts there will be no dramatic changes on the global scale. It is not in Bush's interests to revert to confrontation or, for example, to goad the Soviet Union into a return to totalitarianism and a new arms race. You have to believe that a sober analysis will enable Washington, even if it has freed itself of the "Vietnam syndrome," to refrain from attempts to behave in the international arena as though it were the only superpower, ignoring the Soviet Union and the world community. With whom would Bush build the new world order then?

Nevertheless, life has confirmed that without the USSR there would have been no coalition to force Iraq to leave Kuwait, nor would there have been the Security Council resolutions themselves. Thus it is in Washington's own interests to continue treating the USSR as an equal partner in the international arena. This partnership cannot and, surely, will not always be harmonious. The important thing is that the differences of opinion should not undermine the course of cooperation which both our countries and the whole world need.

Nevertheless, most observers are now talking about a forthcoming adjustment of Soviet-U.S. relations, about pressure on Bush from the right, about the elevation of Pentagon chief Cheney and the eclipsing of Department of State head Baker, Bush's personal friend with whom he once won a tennis championship. Such pressure exists, of course. It must be bluntly said at this point that this pressure is generated not so much by differences in the positions of the USSR and the United States in the Iraqi conflict as by our internal problems. It is those problems that are being exploited by people who are prompting Bush to reassess relations with the USSR.

Here are just a few of the arguments most often cited in justification of this revision: First—the resignation of Shevardnadze which, it is said, will inevitably change the confidential character of relations between our diplomatic department and the Department of State; second—the weakening of the center, the events in the Baltic, and the rise of destructive forces in the Union, which may lead to a general destabilization; and third—the USSR's deteriorating economic situation, the ineffectiveness of our reforms, and as a general conclusion, "Gorbachev's turn to the right" and the USSR's return to the old days.

One would very much like to reject out of hand all these, as we used to be fond of writing, "attempts by base methods." But that will not make things any easier. There is no "turn to the right" and there is no possibility of the USSR's returning to the past—this was especially emphasized by M.S. Gorbachev in his recent speeches in Belorussia. But E.A. Shevardnadze's gesture, whether he likes it or not, has certainly cost perestroyka dearly. Talk of the instability of the Soviet leadership and the "departure of the reformists" has become a common argument in favor of a reassessment of Washington's course of "support for Gorbachev." Even more use is being made of the "war of laws" that is raging in our country and all the centrifugal forces that are destroying the Union.

For example, here is the recommendation given in THE WASHINGTON POST the other day by Z. Brzezinski: "The United States must conduct a dual policy. On the one hand, we must maintain normal and official diplomatic relations with the Soviet Government in Moscow. On the other hand, we must do everything in our power to broaden our relations with the republics that are abandoning communist ideology and are seeking genuine independence." Brzezinski goes on to define the aim of these relations with the republics, which is: "To strengthen their confidence, maintain their sense of institutional individuality, and gradually enhance their international status. The question is how to do this." That is indeed the question. After all, what Brzezinski is proposing, if translated into normal language, could well be seen as a call for interference in the USSR's internal affairs, for the promotion of its collapse. But the eternal question arises: Who stands to gain? No one, and that includes the United States. Need one point out that the collapse of a great power possessing powerful nuclear weapons, and civil war or chaos in it, is bound to destabilize the entire world situation, with unpredictable consequences?

On the other hand, as Roland Khoumet [name as transliterated] writes in a book on Soviet-U.S. relations that has just been published in New York, the new thinking "is of undoubted benefit to U.S. security and security on a global scale." The author believes that the U.S. leadership, which is currently faced with the dilemma of what future course to choose with regard to the USSR, should opt for constructive development. "The Soviet Union," he writes, "is an important factor in international affairs and we have been given a unique opportunity to improve relations between the two great powers in the years to come."

It is to be hoped that this opportunity will not be missed. As the well-known sovietologist Professor (?Jerry Hough) of Duke University said, "it would be a catastrophe if Soviet-American relations were to deteriorate during the period of the formation of the new order that Bush wants to create in the world."

Much depends on Washington, of course. But let us not forget that much depends on us too. All things are interrelated in the world today. The empty shelves in our stores, every hiccup and hesitation in the transition to the market, the crude violation of democracy and of the Constitution, all the means to an end that are out of order in a civilized society— all this reverberates in the world arena.

Winds of change are inevitable. It is where they are blowing that is important.

Report on Bush Interview With Arab Journalists

PM1003170591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 11 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[Report by TASS correspondent Aleksandr Korolev: "Time To 'Ponder Anew'"]

[Text] Washington, 10 Mar—U.S. President George Bush has granted an interview to correspondents of several Arab newspapers. Expressing a "sense of gratitude and appreciation" to the Arab world for its firm support for the multinational coalition force in the war against Iraq, he said that the time has now come to "ponder anew" the building of peace in the Near East.

We have started the process by sending Secretary of State J. Baker to the region, although this does not mean that it has to be a purely U.S. plan, for "we only want to play a constructive role," the head of the United States noted. Pointing out that "bringing to an end the enmity between Israel and the Arabs" is an important part of a settlement, the President stressed that it would need concessions "on both sides" to achieve this. In particular, he mentioned the implementation of the principle of "territory in exchange for peace." "This is not something new," the President said. "We, like many other countries, have for a long time been supporters of UN Resolutions 242 and 338, but many have moved away from them." Therefore, following consultations, we intend to seek mutual understanding "with our coalition partners, with Israel and others" on all the areas of a Near East settlement.

G. Bush also said he was in no hurry to establish a dialogue with the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people, since that organization's leadership closely associated itself with President Saddam Husayn during the crisis in the Persian Gulf. Their role in the security system has diminished, at least for the moment, since they "did not condemn the aggression" and went "too far in their support for Saddam Husayn." He reiterated that the United States is not in favor of the creation of a Palestinian state, and in this respect its position "differs from the position of many Arab friends." Nonetheless, the leader of the U.S. Administration admitted that "there will be no peace until the Palestinian question is completely resolved."

Touching on the issue of the demilitarization of the region, which is an essential condition of the creation of new security structures, G. Bush pointed out in particular that "this does not mean the disarmament of Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Syria or any country. That would be idealistic." "However, I do believe," he added, "that we could achieve a significant reduction in the flow of armaments to this troubled area of the world." The President admitted that the United States "was involved in some places" in the process of supplying weapons to the Near East.

At the journalists' request, he dwelt on the role Washington allocates to Iraq in a postwar settlement. "First of all," the administration head said, "we never believed that it was in the interests of the Persian Gulf countries or the United States to create a vacuum in Iraq. We do not want an unstable Iraq." At the same time he made it clear that this country must have a government that "must give to the whole world a signal that they want to live within their own borders, reject aggression" and their "so-called claims to Kuwait", and want to return to the "family of peace-loving nations." One of the questions Baker will discuss with our partners is how "serious it would be for them if Saddam Husayn were to remain in power," the President pointed out.

China

Li Peng Sees 'No Alternative' to Gorbachev

LD0903133591 Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] The chairman of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Li Peng, has voiced the opinion that in the near future President Mikhail Gorbachev will remain at his post since there is no alternative to him.

Li Peng emphasized in a meeting with Japanese officials in Beijing that despite the difficulties on the Soviet domestic scene, President Gorbachev was the only political leader who could keep the country from breakdown.

Li Peng also noted that China would maintain goodneighborly relations with the Soviet Union no matter what the results of the national referendum about the future of the Union on the 17th will be.

Speaking about relations with the Russian Federation, the Chinese premier underlined an intention to maintain relations with its government, regarding the Russian Federation as in integral part of the USSR.

PRC Envoy Hands Over N-Treaty Accession Document

PM1103124191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[Unattributed report: "Deposited"]

[Text] PRC Ambassador to the USSR Yu Hongliang has deposited with the USSR Government a document on the PRC's accession to the 11 February 1971 Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Seabed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof.

The aforementioned document was accepted on behalf of the USSR Government by I.A. Rogachev, USSR deputy minister of foreign affairs.

Northeast Asia

Spokesman Says Japan To Continue Emergency Aid

LD0703122391 Moscow World Service in English 0800 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The Japanese Government intends to carry out its decision on giving emergency aid to the Soviet Union suspended over the events in the Baltic region. This was said by spokesman of the Japanese Foreign Ministry, Nagawa Hiorda. Under this aid program Japan plans to deliver to the Soviet Union about 75 million dollars worth of medicines and food and provide 100 million dollars in loans.

Gorbachev Congratulates Mongolian Party Leader

LD0703173591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1710 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (TASS)—Mikhail Gorbachev, CPSU Central Committee general secretary, has congratulated Budrigchaagyin Dash-Yondon, chairman of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party [MPRP] Central Committee, on the occasion of his recent election as chairman of the Central Committee of the party.

Gorbachev wished him success in realizing the course elaborated by the 20th MPRP Congress and expressed confidence that "comradely interaction between our parties will continue to be an important component of Soviet-Mongolian relations."

Culture Minister Gubenko Arrives in Japan

LD2702093391 Moscow TASS in English 0852 GMT 27 Feb 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Solntsev]

[Text] Tokyo February 27 TASS—Nikolay Gubenko, the Soviet minister of culture, arrived in Japan today for a two-day visit. He has been invited by speaker of the House of Representatives of the Japanese parliament and head of the parliamentary association of Japanese-Soviet friendship, Yoshio Sakurauchi, the honorary chairman of the preparatory committee for the Festival of Soviet Art timed for Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Japan in April.

During his stay in Japan the Soviet minister will hold negotiations with the Japanese side on matters associated with the holding of the festival of Soviet art. The festival will become an important event in the cultural life of Japan and will promote the further widening of verstile ties and the deepening of mutual understanding between the peoples of the two countries. Gubenko will also meet with Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama and other Japanese leaders. This evening the Soviet minister of culture will speak at the inauguration of a Soviet film festival in Tokyo.

Cultural Program Signed With Japan

LD0703211891 Moscow TASS in English 1836 GMT 7 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Solntsev]

[Text] Tokyo March 7 TASS—A programme for the implementation of an agreement between the governments of the Soviet Union and Japan on cultural contacts in a period on [as received] April 1, 1991, to March 31, 1993, was signed here today by participants in the recently concluded session of the Soviet-Japanese commission on cultural relations.

The programme will take effect during President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Japan in April.

Under the programme, a Soviet art festival, timed for the visit, will be held in Japan. Joint concerts will feature Yelena Obraztsova, Yevgeniy Nesterenko and world-renowned pianist Hiroko Nakamura and violinist Akiko Suwanai, who won the first prize at the Ninth International Tchaikovsky Competition.

It is difficult to name a sphere of cultural relations which would not be reflected in the programme which features in particular guest performances in Japan by the best Soviet ballet troups, exhibitions "100 masterpieces from the Moscow Kremlin" and works of art from the collection of the state Hermitage.

Soviet art lovers will have an opportunity to attend performances by the traditional Noh, or Nogaku, theatre, the Kageboshi Theatre of Shades and will get acquainted with magnificent collections at Japanese museums of painting.

Cooperation from the Soviet side has been provided for on both all union and republican levels. The document [words indistinct] encouraging direct contacts between Soviet territories, regions, cities and organisations and their Japanese partners.

Southeast Asia & Pacific

Thai Coup May 'Slow' Cambodian Peace Process

BK0703075591 Moscow International Service in Vietnamese 1200 GMT 3 Mar 91

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Events in Cambodia have been given different appraisals. Some people believe the situation has led to a stalemate and despair. Others maintain that satisfactory developments have brought more hope. Now there is a need to restore the work of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia that was set up last year. It is important that all parties have favored the draft documents for solving the Cambodian issue put forth by the standing members of the UN Security Council. But some differences still exist and, as urged by the leadership of the State of Cambodia, these differences should be overcome so as to end the civil war, achieve national reconciliation, and prevent the murderous Polpotist regime from returning to power in Cambodia.

It is worth noting that the Cambodian Armed Forces, according to the Cambodian defense minister, have refrained from launching offensive campaigns. They have only defended themselves against enemy attacks. This decision was made following a proposal by the State of Cambodia for an early cease-fire to permit the resumption of negotiations and a prompt restoration of peace.

According to the leadership of the State of Cambodia, another important problem is for all Cambodian parties to pledge to stop receiving foreign military aid and for foreign countries to stop providing arms supplies to the Cambodian parties concerned. In this respect, it is worth recalling that in September 1989—immediately after the first round of the Paris International Conference on Cambodia was concluded—the Soviet Union and the United States expressed their readiness to join with other countries in declaring their suspension of military aid to all opposing Cambodian factions, regarding this as an important factor for arriving at a comprehensive settlement of this issue.

The Vietnamese Foreign Ministry's recent statement also emphasizes that now is the time for all countries involved in the conflict to agree on how to realize this Soviet-U.S. initiative. The statement points out that Vietnam is ready to mutually agree with Thailand and Laos to halt the flow of foreign arms supplies to Cambodia through their respective territories and that the United Nations can monitor the implementation of this agreement.

Recent eventful developments in Thailand, a neighbor of Cambodia where a military coup has just taken place, will have a definite impact on the process of solving the Cambodian issue. Observers believe that the removal from power of Thai Prime Minister Chatchai Chunhawan, who played an active role in seeking a solution to the Cambodian crisis, may slow, at least for a time, the pace of ironing out this issue. However, a representative of the existing Thai leadership has declared that Thailand will continue to implement the policy of solving the Cambodian issue by peaceful means.

At present, fighting continues in Cambodia. Although the scale of the war is somewhat limited, the death toll continues to be on the rise. The anti-Phnom Penh coalition forces, especially the Polpotist clique, have used heavy artillery and other modern weapons to launch their offensive campaigns against a number of regions for land-grabbing purposes, killing and wounding many civilians and inflicting heavy material losses on these regions.

Near East & South Asia

Primakov Assesses Gulf Conflict

LD1003162391 London KUNA in Arabic 1245 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 10 Mar—Yevgeniy Primakov, personal envoy of Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, has expressed his pleasure at Kuwait's liberation and the restoration of Kuwaiti legitimacy. He affirmed the need to bolster Kuwaiti-Soviet relations in the coming stage.

Primakov was thus speaking in an exclusive interview he gave to Barjas al-Barjas, chairman of the board of directors and director general of the KUWAIT NEWS AGENCY, KUNA. He said it is important that Kuwait regain its freedom, independence, and sovereignty. He expresed his doubts about Saddam Husayn's political future and the continuation of his rule in the long term.

Primakov was speaking at his office at the Kremlin in the heart of the Soviet capital. He said he was pleased that the final military stage of the war "did not lead to the losses we were expecting because Saddam Husayn used to threaten, as you know, to spark off a large-scale war, and you know what wars in cities mean."

Speaking of the efforts he exerted on behalf of the Soviet Government to resolve the question of the occupation of Kuwait, Primakov said that "our aim was to secure Kuwait's liberation and sovereignty. We pursued this aim and hoped to achieve this goal by peaceful means, but the time for talking about this has passed now that Kuwait has been liberated."

Mr. Al-Barjas asked afterwards, in his capacity as chairman of the Union of Arab News Agencies, what Primakov perceived as the present and future vistas in the region following the liberation of Kuwait. Primakov replied that he would deal at the beginning with what had taken place during his three visits to the region and his visits to Saddam Husayn since last October. He was talking from his own personal observations.

The Soviet official added that from the outset he had felt the uncompromising stance taken by Saddam Husayn toward the crisis. However, when reviewing Saddam's stance over his three meetings with him "the contradiction, the ambiguity, and the fallacies behind his reasons to invade Kuwait and his determination not to withdraw became clear, a matter which highlights his personal ambitions."

He added that from his first meeting with Saddam in Baghdad last October, he could see how hard the Iraqi position was following its occupation of Kuwait .

He pointed out that he had met several times with Saddam before the crisis but they had never talked about Kuwait.

He talked afterwards about how Saddam himself, during his meeting with him in 1985, used to acknowledge Kuwait's aid during his war with Iran. He stressed, however, that their first meeting, which took place in October after the beginning of the crisis, centered on Saddam's hard stance toward the Kuwaiti problem.

Primakov pointed out in his interview with Saddam Husayn concentrated primarily during that meeting on what he called the historical right to Kuwait, as well as Nuri al-Sa'id [prime minister who also did not recognize Kuwait's independence].

The Soviet official, who specializes in Middle Eastern affairs, said that during the meeting on 5 October Saddam Husayn also talked in detail about the issues of border and economic disputes.

Primakov pointed out that it was clear from Saddam's presentation that "he suffers from a complex about a political-economic conspiracy in which Kuwait is engaged against him."

Primakov added that he directly presented to him the clear Soviet position toward this crisis, "and I am not saying that because I am talking to you as a Kuwaiti, but I told him directly and firmly that Kuwait is Kuwait and Iraq is Iraq."

The personal envoy of the Soviet president stressed that the Soviet position toward the issue of the occupation of Kuwait differs completely from the Iraqi position. "I told him that we have nothing in common on this issue, but we differ along the whole line."

Primakov said: "As far as Iraq is concerned, the Soviet Union has no wish to divide Iraq, change its borders, or change its political situation."

After that, through his review of his meetings with Saddam after the crisis, the Soviet official talked about his second visit to Baghdad and his talks with Saddam Husayn on 28 October.

Primakov said Saddam Husayn did not mention during this second meeting one single word, or anything at all, about the historical right of Iraq to Kuwait "and Tariq 'Aziz as well did not raise this matter during my meeting with him."

He pointed out that he and his colleagues have analyzed the difference between the first and second meetings "and we noted the complete absence of any mention of the historical right during the second meeting."

Primakov added: "The second issue we concentrated on during that time was his ideas about the withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait and the question of linkage between that and the Palestine question."

Primakov mentioned again that during the first meeting between them Saddam "concentrated intensively on the 12 August initiative," whereas in his second meeting he began to give—from afar—some signals about his being a realistic man.

Primakov added that "naturally his talk about his realism was linked to the ideas Yasir 'Arafat and others had raised about possibly keeping the islands and Al-Rumaylah oil field."

The Soviet special envoy added that he noted "a slight retreat in Saddam's position during the second visit, particularly with regard to his 12 August proposals about the linkage, but not with regard to the question of Kuwait."

Primakov disclosed that "Saddam told him he was now ready to withdraw his forces, provided this withdrawal was linked simultaneously to a solution of the Palestine question, and that he was anxious to insure the details would involve some form of linkage between the two issues."

He pointed out that Saddam said on 12 August that "the withdrawal of the forces is linked to the Palestine question. But, at the second meeting on 28 October, he said the matter could be subject to discussion. That is, there was some development."

The Soviet official reviewed the questions Saddam raised during his visit with him on 28 October, such as when will U.S. forces withdraw from the region; when will the economic sanctions against Iraq stop; and what form will the withdrawal take, as well as the stated need to link it with the Palestine question. The last point was the need to provide him with an outlet to the sea, that is, the question of the islands.

Primakov affirmed that during the private meeting he had with Saddam, Saddam told him "that without securing clear answers to these questions, a declaration of withdrawal from Kuwait would be suicide, personally and for Iraq."

After that, Primakov reviewed what had taken place between him and Saddam during their third meeting, which took place during his visit to Baghdad on 12 February. He said the issues Saddam raised "were connected with matters pertaining to the future and his fear that if he were to withdraw the Iraqi force, they would be subjected to attack from the rear, as well as his position with regard to the UN Security Council resolution and the question of reparations. And so, the situation developed."

Mr. al-Barjas expressed his gratitude for the valuable resume presented by Primakov and said that as an Arab and Kuwaiti he feels Saddam Husayn "pushed the Arab cause back 50 years, and has also pushed the Palestinian cause back for a longer period."

Al-Barjas referred to "Saddam's conspiracy with Yasir 'Arafat and King Husayn against Kuwait and the Arab nation."

Primakov replied to that by pointing out that he would like to be "fair" and said he does not think "that that matter has occurred as the result of a conspiracy or deal."

He pointed out that King Husayn "has his own preoccupation: He is struggling to preserve the Hashemite throne."

Primakov said King Husayn "was trying not to escalate the dispute into a crisis because that was going to inflict harm on him."

He said: "No one was confident that Israel would not interfere in the conflict, and if such an interference occurred there would be grave repercussions for King Husayn. The Jordanian monarch was cautious and wary of that."

Concerning 'Arafat, Primakov said "he was trying to benefit from the crisis." [passage indistinct]

Primakov said: "You know that such a meeting would not have been positive in my successive talks with Saddam Husayn. However, this is the firm Soviet position from which there is no retreat. Therefore, I visited his highness the amir in Al-Ta'if."

Mr. al-Barjas praised the Soviet position and talked about historic relations between Kuwait and the Soviet Union, when Kuwait was the first Arab Gulf country to establish diplomatic relations with Moscow.

Primakov said the Soviet Union hopes that once the crisis of Kuwait is resolved the Palestinian problem will be addressed. He added that it seems that there are "excellent preludes" [muqaddimat jayyidah] to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, stressing the need to exploit the current momentum following the end of the Kuwaiti crisis, from which lessons should be drawn.

Mr. al-Barjas stressed for his part that the Kuwaiti stance toward the Palestinian problem is clear—it is the Arabs' central cause—pointing out [Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and] Foreign Minister Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jahir al-Sabah's meeting in Damascus with a number of Palestinian leaders and how he asserted to them that the Palestinian people are a fraternal people, urging the need to address the Palestinian problem. Mr. al-Barjas said he was not speaking in the name of the Kuwaiti Government, but from his knowledge of the Kuwaiti amir's initiatives toward the Palestinian problem and his knowledge of "Yasir 'Arafat's dissatisfaction with Kuwait's decision before the crisis to channel its aid directly to the Palestinian people."

Replying to a question on the future of the Iraqi regime, Primakov said this is a difficult question because he does not know what is taking place [in Iraq]. It seems, however, that "the Iraqi leadership is still in control." Primakov went on to say "there is no doubt that the ground is shaking under Saddam Husayn's feet." On whether the Iraqi regime has any aggressive intention in the future against the region's countries, Primakov replied that he does not think so.

Primakov affirmed that "Iraq has now come to understand that it was facing the whole world, and it is clear to it that it cannot defeat the international community. This is a matter which Iraq has come to understand fully."

He then spoke warmly about the need to expand Soviet-Kuwaiti relations and recalled that his highness the emir of Kuwait had told him during his meeting with him at al-Ta'if prior to the liberation of Kuwait that after the end of the crisis "relations between the two friendly countries will be very developed."

He affirmed the need to bolster economic relations between the two countries, particularly at a time when the USSR is suffering from a severe economic crisis.

Replying to a last question, Primakov expressed his hope to visit Kuwait shortly, but he added that at present he has no specific plans for this and "that everything is possible and any visit will be useful to both sides."

He said these last words in Arabic with a smile on his face as he shook hands with al-Barajas after the meeting, which lasted one full hour.

Primakov, who is versed in Arabic, spoke in Russian despite the fact that he followed what was being said in Arabic and through the Russian translation. He occasionally used some Arabic phrases.

Shevardnadze on Gulf War, Recognizing Israel

AU1103132791 Berlin DER MORGEN in German 8 Mar 91 p 3

[Interview with former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze by Moscow News Media Service, "exclusive for DER MORGEN": "To Achieve a Solution to the Gulf Crisis, the USSR Must Recognize Israel"; place and date not given]

[Text] [DER MORGEN] The Gulf war is over, how do you assess its result?

[Shevardnadze] When we say today that the cold war was ended by the new relations between East and West, between the Soviet Union and the United States, between Europe and other countries, this was made possible by the policy that is rooted in new political thinking. We managed to take the human factor, the importance of moral principles and of ethics into account. The world and politics have changed. We started to trust each other more.

Now the war in the Persian Gulf. It was a very difficult test for us. And now we see: Modern civilization and the world community have stood the test.

We, I mean the entire world community, proved that, notwithstanding the known difficulties, complications, and differences in views and interests, we can cooperate.

Thanks to this cooperation, a catastrophe was prevented. It is terrible that there are victims, that blood was shed, and that material damage was caused. But far worse things might have happened. They did not happen and one can definitely speak of a new political world order. The conviction that aggression must not go unpunished is increasing. This seems to me to be the most important conclusion.

[DER MORGEN] You repeatedly told the Iraqi leadership what disastrous consequences the occupation of Kuwait would have. Why did Baghdad not listen to your warnings?

[Shevardnadze] It is hard to explain what Iraq was guided by when it decided to take this risky step. On the eve of the crisis U.S. Secretary of State James Baker told me during our meeting in Irkutsk that he had information on the possibility of such an aggression. He even received information in this context. I told him that this was completely illogical. In view of the processes that are going on in the world, it was impossible to imagine such an aggression. It seemed to me that reasonable people were unable to make up their minds to take such a step. Therefore I was disappointed when I returned to Moscow and the Iraqi attack on Kuwait became known. However, at once Iraq's act was unhesitatingly evaluated as an aggression and the demand for its immediate end was made.

[DER MORGEN] Your course of action during the crisis met with increasing criticism in the country.

[Shevardnadze] I do not see any mistakes in the policy represented by me, particularly not from the point of view of morals, ethics, and human values. We told the Iraqis right from the beginning: The consequences will be very serious and unpredictable. We also conveyed this to our ambassador in Baghdad and I told this to the Iraqi foreign minister. Finally there was also the exchange of letters, messages from Mikhail Gorbachev to Saddam Husayn. We warned him, but unfortunately we were not able to convince him. Even when the last UN resolution was prepared we insisted on granting Iraq a pause for reflection until 15 January.

We pursued an obvious objective: First of all, to give the Iraqi leadership once again the opportunity to consider everything, in order to come to a real, reasonable decision. And, second, to get all Soviet citizens out of the area of conflict.

We tried to intensively use this pause of goodwill. There were various contacts, for example, the invitation of Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq 'Aziz. I talked to him four times alone and tried to point out the disastrous consequences of aggression to him. And I told him everything I knew about the U.S. military potential, the quality of its military technology, its destructive force, and precision. What is even more important, I openly said that the Iraqi leadership was acting in a suicidal manner. Mikhail Gorbachev conducted the talk with Tariq 'Aziz in an even harder style. It was a short talk containing the categorical request to immediately and unconditionally withdraw troops from Kuwait before the expiration of the deadline set by the Security Council.

[DER MORGEN] Yet the president and you did not even succeed in diverting the Iraqi leaders from their position by one inch.

[Shevardnadze] After the meeting with Tariq 'Aziz in Moscow I came to the conclusion that the war was unavoidable. They were not prepared for any compromises.

The "connection" that they established between the solution of the Palestinian question and the withdrawal from Kuwait was simply shady. On what basis can the liberation of a people be connected with the enslavement of another Muslim people? This was a risky plan with the objective of involving the Israelis in the hostilities at all costs, to provoke them, and to turn the conflict into an Arab-Israeli and afterward possibly into a worldwide conflict. The danger was that great. Therefore, as a matter of principle, I advocated a hard line toward the Iraqi policy right from the beginning. Saddam had to unconditionally withdraw without establishing any connections. Only afterward might all questions—the Palestinians, the development of security structures, and others—be cleared up.

[DER MORGEN] Would Mikhail Gorbachev's well-known initiative on a cease-fire not have been more successful if it had not been made at the last moment, but a little bit earlier?

[Shevardnadze] There was the idea to present a similar initiative on 15 January, at between approximately 1000 and 1200. The conditions were similar to those later proposed by the president. We wanted thorough consultations with the permanent members of the Security Council and with some Arab countries. But the proposal made by the Foreign Ministry was not translated into reality. How are we to assess this now? I do not want to accuse anybody, even more so since I myself was not sure whether Iraq would use this opportunity. They were convinced they might be victorious in this war. Yet it would have been more reasonable to make such a proposal before the expiration of the deadline.

[DER MORGEN] What chances might there have been?

[Shevardnadze] Perhaps... it might have been useful, but more in the sense of propaganda to show that there was still an opportunity.

[DER MORGEN] Is there any room for diplomacy in countries where power is concentrated in the hands of one person, for example, Saddam Husayn?

[Shevardnadze] You are right. Under the conditions of dictatorship and totalitarianism it is hard to talk of diplomacy. Without objective and complete information on the relative strength and on the moods of the people no serious and reasonable decisions can be made.

[DER MORGEN] You were reproached for superfluous severity in the negotiations with Iraq?

[Shevardnadze] I know that I am reproached for advocating military force. This is dubious. Yes, I was tough when I warned against the consequences. I only said that the consequences might be unpredictable if only a single Soviet man was harmed and if not all of our people were permitted to leave the country.

I was reproached for my intention to send Soviet troops to the Gulf. I did no such thing. I admit that on principle I advocated a tough attitude toward the aggressor. However, I also thought of something else, of the actions that we have to take under the conditions of a conflict. Where is the guarantee that tomorrow a similar situation will not develop in some other region? Will the U.S. or the British troops again have to act alone? Or are there other institutions, other instruments? I proposed to use the opportunities of the military committee attached to the Security Council within the framework of the UN Charter. There is a relevant rule in the Charter, according to which the United Nations may conclude agreements with the permanent representatives of the Security Council that troops be placed at its disposal. All that might happen under the auspices of the United Nations and the Security Council. At that time we made such a proposal at the UN General Assembly. Today I am convinced: This exact variant must come first in future conflicts.

[DER MORGEN] Do you still see some mistakes in Soviet policy? What lessons can we draw?

[Shevardnadze] The signals we sent to Saddam Husayn may not have always been justified. I do not rule out that this might be a controversial point. Some signals were clearly wrong, they spurred Saddam on. This is one side. On the other hand, you can imagine that several thousand Soviet citizens who worked in Iraq had to be saved. Therefore, our actions and the trips were justified. The Americans understood this, although there might have been some conflicting feelings. However, in principle we took joint action, especially in the Security Council.

As is known, Gorbachev's initiative to halt the conflict in its last stage, shortly before the ground forces' attack, triggered off contradictory opinions in the world. I do not believe this initiative caused or will cause any serious tensions in Soviet-U.S. relations. Our relations have progressed and are rather promising for the future; they cannot be clouded by such a thing. A new stage has begun. New relations with Iraq lie ahead of us. Here the element of military cooperation and of military technology supplies must be clearly reduced or even completely eliminated. Cooperation in agriculture, irrigation, and electrification of the whole economic system is at issue. Iraq is a very interesting country with proud and very cultivated people who love their work. Therefore, I am convinced that the country will find its place in the civilized world.

Of course, the relationship with Iraq is only part of the problem. Without the solution of the "great" Middle East conflict, the region will nevertheless remain an area of tension. It is necessary to achieve an overall settlement for the situation in the Near and Middle East as soon as possible.

In my opinion, the main point is to find a solution to global problems. It would be useful to immediately start consultations on this issue with the members of the Security Council. Here President Mitterrand's idea on an extraordinary session of the Security Council with the participation of the heads of government deserves to be seriously considered. There all the rational proposals on a Middle East settlement that were made by us and other partners could be discussed. And there is something else. The solution of the problems of this region above all means for the USSR to recognize Israel, in order to get the opportunity to take action with all interested sides without exception.

Palestinians Urged To Focus on Realism

LD0803173191 Moscow International Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Aleksandr Timoshkin commentary]

[Excerpts] Brothers, the end of the war in the Arab Gulf has placed the international community with the problem of the postwar arrangements in the region, and with establishing a guaranteed international security order in the Middle East. Clearly, the setting up of such order is in principle impossible without a comprehensive settlement of the Middle East problem, and its base, the Palestinian issue. The Gulf crisis had brought new factors to the struggle of the Palestinians for the realization of their legitimate rights. Regarding this subject, Radio Moscow commentator Aleksandr Timoshkin says:

[Timoshkin] Dear friends; good evening. In the long months of the unequal struggle, the participants in the Intifadah went through many a trial, and they continue to be subjected to the terror of the occupiers. [passage omitted]

Throughout the 39 months, the Intifadah has witnessed periods of revival and the intensification of the liberation struggle, and periods of temporary stagnation due to objective and subjective causes. Moreover, the months of the Intifadah became more complicated, following the aggression of Iraq against Kuwait in August last year. [passage omitted]

Before last August not only social and information media circles, but also official circles in many countries of the world were expressing sympathy to the Intifadah, and giving it moral and political support. The international prestige of the PLO was very high. But now, regrettably, one has to face the considerable change in the world, where sympathy to the Palestinians has been transferred to the opposite side, and the leading role of the PLO in the Intifadah, and its legal position as the sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinian people, is now ignored. This is being talked about even in the Arab world.

No doubt, an answer to this question should come from the Palestinians themselves, who are taking part in the Intifadah, and who are obliged to live outside the borders of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and Eastern Jerusalem. Furthermore, and I want to stress this in particular, no one now except Israel wants to ignore the role of the PLO in a settlement in the Middle East. One cannot close one's eyes to the fact that Israel has cleverly exploited the pro-Iraq leanings of the PLO and those taking part in the Intifadah, and has embarked upon a fresh campaign of accusations against them of practicing terrorism. At the same time, Israel has been able to obtain a large amount of additional aid from the United States and some other Western states. Consequently, Israel has new chances to continue the iron fist policy against the Palestinians.

I believe, ladies and gentlemen, that participants in the Intifadah, indeed all Palestinians, should draw the bitter lesson from the events brought about by the Iraqi-Kuwaiti crisis. Emotions should make room for peaceful and sound realism, all the more since the Palestinian problem are back once again on the scene of international politics. Thank you. Peace be upon you.

PLO's Status Following Gulf War Examined

PM0603142791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 5 Mar 91 Union Edition p 4

[Report by special correspondents Yevg. Bay and V. Skosyrev: "Difficult Times for PLO"]

[Text] Jerusalem—No political observer in Jerusalem doubts that with the end of the Persian Gulf war the Palestinian problem will again come to the fore during the talks on a peace settlement in the Near East. But who will represent the Palestinians at the possible future talks?—that is the question that is being furiously debated here.

As for Israel, its position is clear-cut. The Shamir government refuses to enter into contact with the PLO and, to use the JERUSALEM POST's expression, is making efforts to discredit it in the international public's eyes. Especially since there are substantial grounds for that: During the Gulf crisis the PLO sided, albeit not unreservedly, with Iraq.

It is not only Tel Aviv that does not want to hear of the PLO. The Arab states which took part in the anti-Iraq coalition have also become decidedly cool toward it. It is reported from Riyadh that Saudi Arabia intends to actively encourage the Palestinians in the occupied territories to withhold their support for PLO leader 'Arafat. The Saudis are even prepared to help the formation of a new Palestinian leadership.

J. Sununu, White House chief of staff, fanned the flames of an already smoldering polemic. Concerning the U.S. Secretary of State's forthcoming trip to the Near East, Sununu pointed out that Washington has still not made up its mind about who will be representing the Palestinians.

Even if the United States has not made up its mind, the Palestinians living on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip have a very firm opinion. Our conversations with them show that the PLO's prestige among the population remains high. Especially since the Palestinian leaders here are able to freely express their views through the mass media. Each week, Faysal al-Husayni, perhaps the most well known Palestinian politician in Jerusalem, gives a news conference where he never tires of reiterating that the PLO is ready for compromise and is ready in particular to accept the Israeli plan for elections in the occupied lands as a step toward a real settlement.

"But what role will the PLO be able to play if Israel refuses to deal with it?" correspondents ask.

"If Israel wants peace it will have to talk with its enemy, that is, with the Palestinians, and that means with the PLO," al-Husayni replies. The discussion turns to Saudi Arabia's position but even here he has something to say: It is not the Saudis but the Palestinian people who will decide who their leaders are.

In brief, the propaganda war accompanying the Intifadah—the Palestinian uprising—has intensified recently. But here one has to bear in mind the following: Whereas previously the PLO received generous donations from Saudi Arabia and other Persian Gulf monarchies, now it cannot count on their petrodollars. And that means that there are difficult times ahead for Y. 'Arafat and his followers.

Glukhov Views Lessons of Gulf War

PM0803124191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 8 Mar 91 Second Edition p 5

[Yuriy Glukhov "Journalist's Notes": "Fragment of the Mirror of a Major War"]

[Text] Historians and political scientists will doubtless be analyzing the ins and outs of the Gulf crisis and war for a long time to come. They will have to research the full drama of the events, when one strong Arab state swallowed up another weak and defenseless one, throwing down a challenge to the world community. It is hardly possible to avoid analogies and parallels—with the actions of the United States or Israel, for instance. It will be necessary to solve the enormous riddle of how, in the space of a single decade, a dictatorial regime twice martyred its own people, sacrificing hundreds of thousands of people for the sake of its bankrupt ambitions.

Clarification of the political and military steps that led to the unleashing of the war lies ahead, as does an analysis of the causes of the tragedy. The international community's action and UN Security Council resolutions may, for all their shortcomings, go down as having asserted the new political thinking in the world and as having created a new world order based on humane and common human principles. Everything lies ahead. These are just the first subjective notes about what has alarmed us and continues to alarm us; these are the first observations and impressions.

Just look how vulnerable the shoots of detente turned out to be in the whirlwind of world upheavals and crises! Hardly had the winds of a "hot" war started wafting their way from the Gulf than the specter of the "cold" war came alive again. The cracks of mistrust, suspicion, and alienation started widening once more.

To describe the mood in the United States with regard to the Soviet peace initiatives, for instance, I would cite an article in Britain's THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH. Quoting an expert consulted by the U.S. Administration, it talked about the Kremlin's "annoying pseudomediation efforts" and "the Russians' malicious interference which threatens to split support (for the United States) at the United Nations." The Soviet peace initiative, the newspaper stated, has produced a flood of hostile commentaries—unprecedented in their scale since Gorbachev's advent to power—in the mass media and among members of Congress.

Nor was the Soviet press found wanting. Washington was accused of imperial behavior, outbursts of militarist sentiment, and of a desire to overcome the "Vietnam syndrome." It was often forgotten that the crisis was provoked by Saddam Husayn and that the burden of responsibility lay entirely with him. After all, catastrophe could have been avoided had he agreed earlier to take the steps he ultimately took.

Unlike certain impulsive journalists, the diplomats, thank God, retained their sangfroid and good sense. The UN Security Council continued to act in concert and, following the cease-fire, adopted another resolution expressing a united position regarding the aggressor.

U.S. Secretary of State Baker tried to smooth over the excessively undiplomatic U.S. press. He stated in an NBC-TV interview: "I believe that the Soviet Union continues to play an exceptionally important political role in everything that has occurred in the Gulf since 2 August. I do not think that we could have done everything we did in the time frame in which we did it if the Soviet Union had not been standing shoulder to shoulder with us all these months."

So let us highlight the main points in the eradication of this crisis. Justice has prevailed. The aggressor has been punished. The international community has not allowed one state to be destroyed by another. It has displayed enviable unanimity and solidarity. For the first time in many years all means, including force, were used to ensure that UN Security Council decisions did not just remain paper resolutions.

Our reader V. Sukhinin of Lugansk believes that this is the only way to deal with those who violate international norms. "If a burglar breaks into your flat, should you plead with him or negotiate with him? Pacifism plays into an aggressor's hands," he writes. But, judging by the many letters from readers, not all opinions are so clear cut. Public opinion in the Soviet Union is split. So what is alarming and disturbing people?

Above all, the initial failure of diplomacy and the scale of the senseless bloodshed. Senseless because the war's outcome was predestined, there could be only one result. Two eras, two centuries—the past and the future, with its fantastic technical superiority—met head on. The fatal outcome for Iraq was predetermined.

I think that the Soviet Union's persistent attempts right up to the very end to find a peaceful way out will be judged on their merits. It was not a question of protecting a regime or of saving Saddam Husayn's "face," but of saving the lives of thousands and thousands of people along with their homes and all the wealth their labor had created.

And the fact that there remained the constant linking thread of talks with Baghdad may have prevented the worst-case scenario—the use by Iraq of chemical and other weapons of mass destruction—and helped to preserve good sense. I would also credit Soviet diplomacy with saving lives and freeing hostages and prisoners—including our U.S. TV journalist colleagues—and with the Iraqis' refusal to engage in destructive street fighting in Kuwait City. On the debit side is our chronic delay in coming up with peace initiatives during the crisis. Incidentally, it sometimes seems to me that the Americans artificially created an "offside" situation by pushing ahead with military solutions and presenting us with a fait accompli.

U.S. Secretary of State Baker informed Soviet Foreign Minister A.A. Bessmertnykh an hour before military operations began on the night of 17 January. Even with the best of intentions it was impossible to stop a war machine that was raring to go. History repeated itself when the Soviet-Iraqi plan submitted to the UN Security Council for a withdrawal of the occupying troops from Kuwait was overturned by the start of the multinational forces' ground operation. I think that the new level of Soviet-U.S. relations, which has been repeatedly stated in Washington and Moscow, requires a far greater degree of confidentiality and coordination of actions.

A few words about the paradoxical picture which took shape on the propaganda front of the Gulf war. The fact is that for the umpteenth time the Arabs—in this instance the Iraqis—were the victims of their own loud rhetoric. Yes, they managed to scare the whole world by threatening to use chemical, bacteriological, and even nuclear weapons, to employ terror and use hostages as a "human shield" at strategic sites. But the threats were just threats.

Unlike its clamorous adversary, the United States and its coalition allies were short on words. Surrogate information on the war was disseminated in doses, not giving any idea of the nature or scale of it. Only once on television did we witness the results of a direct hit by U.S. missiles on a bomb shelter, and we saw that even the shelter could not protect the people hiding in it. What was the fate of the men in the trenches?

The first figures on Iraqi military losses have now appeared. They are stunning. The Saudis are quoting 85,000-100,000 killed and wounded. There have been even higher assessments, too. "In the past few hours the Iraqis have retreated on such a large scale that military commanders heading for al-Basrah have been calling the retreat an outright defeat," David Brinkley of ABC-TV said. "The best description would be to say that we have destroyed them. One of our pilots called the operation a turkey shoot."

The Gulf war tested out many commonly accepted concepts of regional policy on which Iraq's calculations were based—and found them wanting.

The Iraqi Army, rated the fourth largest in the world, was clearly overrated. The assessment of it was based on its size and the experience of the war with Iran. But the Iran-Iraq confrontation and the clash with the multinational forces were incomparable quantities. In the first instance, it was a case of trench warfare with total Iraqi air superiority. In the second instance, Iraq was in Iran's situation. As for the quality of armaments, the world's major weapons producer will always have an advantage over any Third World buyer.

It is pointless to discuss this subject and speculate on the Soviet or other arms held by the Iraqi Army. On the other hand, in light of the Gulf conflict it is by no means pointless to raise once again the question of the moral and ethical aspect of the arms trade. Is such a business appropriate? This issue is again being acutely raised now that a flurry of activity is beginning in the region regarding purchases of the latest U.S. systems.

The Arab factor did not work. The Arabs were unable to find their own peace solution or even to convene a summit to settle the conflict. Iraq failed to split the allied coalition or to force the withdrawal from it of Arab units even at the stage when the joint Soviet-Iraqi plan for a political solution and the practical plan for an Iraqi troop withdrawal from Kuwait was put forward. Nobody extended a saving hand.

The reaction of the Arab masses in support of Husayn did not go any further than outbursts of emotion. Not a single regime in a single Arab country participating in the military operations against Iraq placed itself in jeopardy. The demonstrations in Cairo, for instance, were merely restricted to student marches. The registration of a million volunteers in Algeria turned out to be an empty gesture, as was to be expected.

The Islamic factor was exaggerated. It essentially never amounted to much. Baghdad's calls for a jihad fell flat. There was no friction among coalition troops between the "faithful" and the "infidel," not to mention a war between Islam and Christendom. The Islamic Conference Organization failed to prove its worth. For instance, Afghan mujahidin were to be found on both sides of the front.

For the umpteenth time the Palestinians were the victims of a great deception. They are the easiest people to provoke into rash steps. They are prepared to grasp any straw and to believe anyone—even Saddam Husayn—when they talk about the liberation of Palestine. After all, they are motivated by desperation. It is only by observing matters from the outside that it is possible to act carefully and with a cool head. But when you live behind barbed wire in a camp, when you have used up your strength in an uprising, when you have lost your relatives and friends, when you are exiled and have lost all hope in a peaceful outcome—since Israel ignores the PLO and all its attempts to initiate a peaceful dialogue—it is possible to venture a suicidal step.

I do not think that PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat or the highly experienced King Husayn of Jordan failed to realize that Saddam Husayn's venture would end in a fiasco. But essentially they had no choice—they had to go with the flow or be swept away by the raging elements of the deceived masses who had believed Baghdad.

It would be a tragic mistake to corner the Palestinians and submit an excessive invoice to the PLO and Jordan for their links to Saddam Husayn, while ignoring the fact that they were motivated by a sense of doom. The "turkey shoot" must not be repeated in another version—Palestinian or otherwise. A repetition of the tragedy is a real possibility until the Arab-Israeli conflict and the problem of restoring Palestinians' rights—including their right to a homeland—are resolved, or while the question of an arms race in the Near East remains open.

At the height of the war there was talk of the powers granted to the coalition countries by the UN Security Council being exceeded. This talk was just gossip. But a situation whereby a mandate given by the international community could be abused must be ruled out. We need a definite mechanism to govern the use of international forces in extreme conditions.

The end of the war in the Gulf gave rise to euphoria among some people and to fear among others of the possible emergence of a "unipolar world" ruled by the diktat of the "hyperpower"—the United States. This euphoria, in my view, is illusory and dangerous for the United States itself, which inevitably runs the risk of entering into confrontation with the entire world. The fears are probably exaggerated, but they are not groundless.

Take a look at the text of D. Brinkley's interview with B. Scowcroft, U.S. national security adviser. Scowcroft admits that U.S. troops had tested their weapons on a "live" test range. "This war was exceptionally suited to the use of the power we had developed for another war—war in West Europe," Scowcroft said. "It allowed us to test our equipment, our concepts of air and ground warfare, and so forth."

Reports have now appeared that some U.S. troops may be detained in the region for a short period, while others will return to Europe. But in what form?

"In the current transitional period, when Europe is still finding its feet, when relations between East and West Europe are only just taking shape, and when there is instability in certain parts of Europe and chaos in the Soviet Union," Scowcroft mused, "now is not the time to conclude that an entirely new era has dawned and that a U.S. presence can be eliminated."

These ideas of "chaos" mesh somewhat suspiciously with the West's importunate attention to the Baltic and the Transcaucasus, and with the "appeals to the United Nations" made by our local ethnic leaders. I would like to caution against attempts to interfere in our internal affairs.

I am deliberately focusing on the negative costs and shadowy aspects of the development of the crisis so as to see them clearly and overcome them. After all, we will have to develop the main point—established cooperation for the sake of a secure and lasting peace.

Currently mankind has looked once more into the mirror of war and taken fright. It has seen an orgy of death, "smart" bombs and missiles from which there is no salvation, day become night, poisoned air and water... But this was just a small fragment of the mirror of a major war.

So is it not time we came to our senses?

U.S. Priorities in Middle East Issues Viewed

LD1003110991 Moscow Radio Peace and Progress in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Andrey Vassilev commentary]

[Text] George Bush has defined four priorities for settlement in the Arab Gulf region: The establishment of a collective security system there; control of the profileration of weapons of mass destruction and the means of their transportation; use of diplomatic means for solving conflicts, headed by the Arab-Israeli conflict; and finally, the achievement of economic progress.

We shall discuss in detail the U.S. views on the scopes of the order that should prevail in the aftermath of the war.

The establishment of a collective security system in the region has actually begun, though this operation should more correctly be called the creation of a semi-regional peace system. The most active members in this operation are the Gulf states headed by Saudi Arabia, which was most terrified by Saddam Husayn's adventure. It was also joined by Egypt. As to Syria, it is still watching the development of the situation.

It is very unlikely that this initiative will be of interest to those Arab countries which support Saddam Husayn in one way or another.

The question of the control of weapons of mass destruction is extremely important. As is known, Israel is the only Middle East country that possesses nuclear weapons, though its leadership refuses to admit this. As to Iraq, its efforts in this field have dropped to zero as a result of the Gulf war. As for Libya, it has a nuclear reactor, but it appears to lack the technical capability to produce a destructive nuclear warhead.

The inequality in this field between Israel and the Arab states arouses painful reactions from a number of Arab countries. This prompted these countries, headed by Iraq, and according to some information, followed by Libya, to produce chemical weapons, or what is called "the nuclear bomb of the poor."

Luckily, it has become possible to stop the proliferation of such weapons in the region. But the operation involves great danger.

Undoubtedly, the settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict occupies the prominent position among Middle East issues. The unresolved Palestine question has been the trump, and indeed the sole, card in the hands of Saddam who has tried to use it to win Arab public opinion over to his side through his numerous statements about the need to link the question of the occupation of Kuwait and to the question of the occupied Arab territories.

It must be admitted that this tactic has won him a large number of supporters, particularly among the Palestinians.

Tragically, the leadership of the Palestine revolution tied its hands by supporting the Iraqi regime. It thus further harmed its reputation among the world community and thus pushed further away the possibility of starting talks for resolving the Palestine question, including its solution within the framework of an international conference.

As to the need for economic progress in the region in a more organzied manner, there is no need to analyze this as it is self-evident.

It is clearly evident that the Middle East will never be the same as it was before the Gulf War. But will the Middle East become more secure and more prosperous? The answer to this question depands, first of all, on the people sof this troubled region themselves.

Postwar Gulf, Baker Stance Considered

LD0603175191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1210 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Yuriy Solton commentary]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is going on a long tour of foreign countries. He will visit Rome and several states in the Middle East and southwest Asia and then make a stopover in Moscow. The aim of the trip is to hold consultations on the situation in the Persian Gulf area and in the region as a whole developing after the end of the war with Iraq. Yuriy Solton has this comment and this is what he writes:

When asked by journalists how the United States visualizes a future settlement in the region, James Baker gives an evasive answer. A little more than one month ago the principles for normalizing the situation in the Middle East and Southwest Asia were outlined clearly in a joint statement issued by the U.S. Secretary of State and the Soviet Foreign Miniser. The statement listed as the primary task the need to ensure a lasting stability and peace on the basis of effective security structures in the region. Especially underlined was that the removal of the forces and causes of conflict, including the Arab-Israeli conflict, would be a matter of special importance.

It is true, for the official recognition of these principles, Baker was strongly criticized by the Washington right-wingers of the pro-Israeli orientation. He is said to have been reproached even by President Bush. Hence his present cautious attitude. But doesn't it mean something more? May it not mean for example that Washington is eager to use its victory over Iraq to meet its narrow selfish interests? It is difficult to give a precise answer to the question but there are some things that can't help but put us on the look out. I think an easy victory over Iraq made some heads dizzy with success. Once again we hear at the highest level in Washington about America's leading role in the world and its unprecedented opportunities to meet challenges quickly and successfully.

Various plans are discussed in the press of how to preserve U.S. military presence in the Middle East and in Southwest Asia for an indefinite time; to leave a limited military contingent there; arrange permanent naval patrolling; or keep rapid deployment units in combat readiness in close proximity to the region. I don't want to say that any of these plans will be translated into reality but the tendency (?is) to resolve the problems of the region alone and with the help of military forces there. Without question, the United States played a decisive role in winning a quick military victory over Iraq. But this victory (?would not have been) so quick had it not been for the joint efforts of the powerful anti-Iraqi coalition in which the Soviet Union took an active part.

The postwar problems in the region also require a collective approach. Many states, including Arab, adhere to this point of view. Moscow holds the view that the situation in the region should be determined first and foremost by the peoples living in its territory. The Soviet president's aide Vitaliy Ignatenko declared at a briefing that the Soviet Union was for peace, tranquility, and law and order in the region. In his words, the Soviet side was working on its own plan of a postwar settlement in the Gulf area that should be integrated into the plans of other countries. The main thing is not to let armed conflict be repeated again, Yuriy Solton writes in conclusion.

Commentary Calls for End to Mideast Arms Race

LD0603114791 Moscow International Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Commentary by Aleksandr Krasnov: "The Middle East; Is It Not Time To Begin Disarmament?"]

[Text] The war in the Gulf provides much for contemplation about the path that should be pursued toward the creation of an effective system to ensure security and stability in the Middle East. I believe one way to reach this objective is to stop the arms race in this region which is on the verge of an explosion. Bear in mind that the war in Kuwait has dispelled the prevailing perception that security increases proportionaly with the increase of arms. The example of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia provides the clearest evidence on the sterility of such perceptions. Tens of billions of dollars have been spent on the acquisition of the most advanced systems and types of weapons, however, they all appeared weak before the first serious war threat. Therefore, she was forced to seek foreign military assistance to protect her borders and territory against the probable aggression.

The countries of the Middle East now enjoy a military capability that far exceeds their actual economic and demographic weight in the world. This capability becomes a bigger and bigger obstacle on the path of promoting the process of international disarmament to which all peoples link their future without wars.

It is no coincidence that statesmen and social circles in many countries are calling for agreements on reducing armaments in the region. The transformation from over-armament to the limits of defensive purposes only should be a basic principle for these agreements. However, the attitudes toward the definition of the criteria of these agreements varies greatly. For example, statesmen in some countries are trying to create the wrong impression that Iraq is the only country in the region that enjoys a huge military capability. This is not the case at all. There are other heavily armed countries in the Middle East. If we are to talk seriously about the establishment of an effective system for security in the Middle East, it is necessary to impose a strict control on arms imports into the region. Soviet diplomacy adheres to this position.

It is pre-ordained for us to make such judgments sometimes. Halting the arms race in the Middle East requires the elimination of the sources and roots of the Arab-Israeli confrontation. On the other hand they [not further identified] consider that as long as the arms race is going on in the Middle East, the chronic conflict in the region will not be solved. It seems that to break this vicious circle requires the organization of a two-pronged operation simultaneously, namely halting the arms race and at the same time settling the conflict between the Arabs and Israel peacefully.

I believe that the circumstances now are favorable for that. I mean specifically the level of cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States and the majority of countries of the international community in solving the crisis in the Gulf. If the international community works with such a constructive spirit, it will be capable of reaching a decisive turn in the search for a settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The double-standard policy adhered to by some influential states in the Middle East should, actually, be abandoned in this respect.

I want to stress that the process of peaceful settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict will see the urgent question of turning the region into a free zone of weapons of mass destruction which are possessed not only by Iraq but also by Israel, the military capability of which must be placed under control. It is clear that Israel has to take part in the agreements on halting the arms race in the Middle East.

Soviet Kuwait Embassy Looting Reported

PM0603103991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Mar 91 Union Edition pp 1, 5

[Report by correspondent B. Ivanov: "Seven Months of Nightmare"]

[Excerpt] Kuwait City—Kuwait City, Baghdad Street. A small six-story building of blue-white concrete blocks. On the gates is a tarnished, blackened plaque with the now barely discernible inscription: "USSR Embassy."

It was from here in late August last year that a convoy of motor vehicles set off, carrying diplomats, employees from various Soviet institutions, and specialists and their families out of Iraqi-occupied Kuwait. I was among those who left, having come to work at IZVESTIYA's Kuwait correspondents center only a few weeks earlier. And now a little more than six months later by the will of fate or rather thanks to the good will of the Saudi Information Ministry, which authorized the trip, I was in Kuwait again.

There is not a soul around the embassy. The once lively area now seems to have died. The building is closed, the doors are intact, the windows are intact. But the small embassy yard is blocked with fragments of stones, the remains of some crates or other, and rusty iron structures. In a corner near the entrance a broken child's tricycle has found lonely refuge. What happened here after our departure then, in August? I recall that the representative of the Iraqi troops present during the evacuation told one of our diplomats: "Close the embassy and don't worry. No one will enter. Everything will be safe and sound." Was everything as the Iraqi had assured us?

I questioned the inhabitants of nearby houses about it. "No, that is not so," said one of them, called Yusuf. "That same night, after all the Russians had left, several vehicles with Iraqi military men approached your embassy. They entered the embassy, spent a very long time there, then brought out some things and loaded them onto the trucks. The Iraqis came several more times after that..." [passage omitted]

East Europe

CSFR's Pithart Meets With Premier Pavlov

LD0703184391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1614 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 7 Mar (TASS)—Valentin Pavlov, USSR prime minister, today received Petr Pithart, chairman of the Czech Republic Government, who is on a working visit in Moscow at the invitation of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Government.

A wide range of issues on Soviet-Czechoslovak relations and the prospects of cooperation in various spheres were discussed. Pithart stressed that Czechoslovakia has always seen stable relations with the Soviet-Union as an important factor in its economic development, and it wishes to retain the good traditions of Soviet-Czechoslovak cooperation in the future. The issue of economic links was examined in an interested manner, and a desire to overcome difficulties that have arisen in mutual trade was expressed. It was agreed that the examination of all problems of mutual interest, including the development of exchanges in the spheres of science, culture, and contacts between people, will be continued during the next government-level contacts by the two countries and between individual republics.

East Europe Said Facing Foreign Debt Problems

PM1103091091 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 7 Mar 91 p 3

[TASS report: "Out of CEMA Into the Black Hole..."]

[Text] The countries of Eastern Europe will jump out of CEMA and into a black hole of debt. Such is the conclusion drawn in an report by the OECD.

CEMA's dissolution and the East European countries' transfer to hard currency based trade with the West may well spell economic collapse for these states. Today, the East European countries' total foreign debt already stands at the colossal sum of $123 billion. This is mentioned in a special report by the OECD which has been published in Zurich.

The document's authors are particularly concerned at the simultaneous deterioration of economic indicators and sharp rise in debts. Financial and economic difficulties in East European countries are compounded by inflation and increasing social problems. The situation is further complicated by the adaptation of these states' economies to world prices and the abolition of the transferable ruble, which was used as currency within CEMA.

Over the past year, the West's perception of the solvency of East European countries has altered sharply. The time when these states could obtain credit from Western banks quite easily has gone. Today, private banks have in effect halted all dealings with East European countries.

Within the last 12 months, the size of the East European countries' foreign debt has increased by 13 percent to $123 billion. Since 1987 the cost of interest repayments on the debt has doubled—this year, East European countries will have to allocate $12 billion to service the debt. According to OECD figures, last year the greater part of the profits from exports by East European countries including the USSR went on interest repayments. To top it all, goods from that part of the world are singularly uncompetitive, which means East European countries will not be able to significantly increase the volume of exports in the immediate future and thus loosen the debtor's noose.

Bulgaria, Hungary, and Poland are in the most difficult financial situation today. And the USSR can expect hard times this year from the point of view of repaying its debts.

The report stresses that in such conditions the main burden for financing reforms in East Europe falls on the international financial institutions and bilateral intergovernmental agreements. However, specialists believe that any readiness to proffer financial aid will depend greatly on the ability of the government of each East European country to push ahead steadfastly and consistently with reforms aimed at establishing market relations.

West Europe

Petrovskiy Meets UK Officials for Gulf Talks

LD0803152891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1418 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 8 Mar (TASS)—Issues relating to seeking ways for building peace in the Persian Gulf region in the post-crisis period were discussed during consultations between USSR Deputy Foreign Minister Vladimir Petrovskiy and British Assistant Under-Secretaries of State for Foreign Affairs D. Gore-Booth and P. Goulden in Moscow today.

A common opinion was expressed that [words indistinct] in the region must play a decisive role in forming an effective system of peace and security there, stage-by-stage. At the same time, both sides stressed the importance of involving the United Nations, the Security Council and its five permanent members in the processes of establishing such a system.

The sides also spoke in favor of parallel constructive efforts for unblocking all conflicts remaining in the Middle East, above all the Arab-Israeli conflict.

No Reason Seen for NATO 'Immortality'

LD0803162191 Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Vladislav Drobkov commentary]

[Text] The news that the Soviet Union will shortly find itself without military allies in Europe for the first time since the end of the World War II has caused serious alarm. That the West is in no hurry to follow in the footsteps of the East and disband the military organization of NATO has only added to that concern. The North Atlantic alliance has been claiming that its military organization must be preserved and even strengthened.

Despite the indisputable warming of the international climate and greater good-neighborliness in Europe, this country is described in NATO's draft military doctrines as the main potential threat. Since NATO said that it wants to retain its military machine in order to neutralize that threat, one may ask in what particular way is it going to do so? With the force of arms.

I believe that the impermissibility of the use of force or threat of force against any other country taking part in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, proclaimed in the Paris Charter for a new Europe, calls in question the preservation of one military alliance at a time when its opponent disbands itself.

To my mind the U.S. presence in Europe, something NATO continues to defend, will make no sense in the future. The Paris Charter gives enough room for building a fundamentally new system of collective security that would guarantee the legitimate interests of all countries and slash military spending.

But let's be realistic. The simultaneous dissolution of two military political blocs in Europe that the Soviet Union has repeatedly called for has not taken place. It is very unlikely that they will be reformed into mostly political structures in the near future. Whatever NATO's military and political leaders may say, the bloc founded in order to contain and throw back Communism cannot be reformed or adjusted to the new objectives overnight.

One can only hope that this legacy of the Cold War will gradually disappear in a situation where there will be no threat. Anyway, I see no reason for NATO's immortality.

Levin Defends Soviet-German Treaties

LD0803142291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0630 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] [Announcer] The USSR Supreme Soviet ratified three treaties between our country and Germany as early as last Monday. However, discussions in this respect are continuing. What lies behind it? I asked my colleague Viktor Levin to answer this question.

[Levin] In my view, those who are stubbornly attacking the Soviet-German accords are aiming not so much at these documents as they are trying to undermine under the new thinking in foreign policy, while also pursuing internal political ends. To clarify, I will try to analyze the argumentats of the Soviet-German treaties' opponents. Their main thesis is as follows: We have given a lot away without receiving anything back. Well, under conditions when the country is preparing itself for switching to a market economy, such a thesis sounds consistent with the tendencies of the time. Indeed, under a market economy, when you give something you should receive something back. But politics, excuse me, is not a market. Totally different criteria from commodities and money are used. If you approach this from an unbiased position, it is easy to be convinced that we have not given anything of ours to the Germans. You cannot regard the sovereignty returned to Germany as Soviet property. Sovereignty is the right of every people and every state. To call it into question, resorting to speculation on the Soviet people's feelings, the feelings caused by the war and which, of course, require respect, but by no means speculation. This is, at least, indecent.

It is also said that the Soviet Union is putting itself under threat by withdrawing troops from Germany and other countries, and that the danger for our borders is increasing. Well, in the first place, this attempt to put everybody on the same level does not look very respectful with regard to our allies of yesterday in the Warsaw Treaty. In the second place, which seems particularly important to me, we cannot forget that as our troops withdraw from Germany, the German Bundeswehr itself will be reduced. In the end, when 370,000 Soviet servicemen leave Germany, the Bundeswehr will have, such a coincidence, the same 370,000 whereas now its strength exceeds 650,000. How one can draw the conclusion, from comparing these figures, that the threat for us is increasing, I cannot understand. The more so when you know that the FRG's obligations not to have, receive and produce nuclear, chemical and bacteriological weapons are enshrined, under the same treaty on the final settlement with regard to Germany.

I have no doubt that all these facts are known to the generals and colonels and civilians who question the accords with Germany. But obviously these people keep firmly and rigorously to the position that if the facts do not conform to their views, so much for the facts. But their views, to all appearances, are determined by dogmatic conceptions about class interests and an irrepressible thirst to have an enemy. It is necessary to create an image of an enemy, for without this ominous image their own existence, obviously, turns out to be under a big question mark. I allow myself to conclude that these people do not care for the interests of the Soviet people, as they claim, but only for their own interests, which have nothing in common with the interests of the people. One can cite quite a few cases, accumulated over seven decades, to this effect.

General Views Troop Withdrawal From FRG

AU0803144891 Berlin NEUES DEUTSCHLAND in German 6 Mar 91 p 11

[Interview with Lieutenant General Vladimir Grebenyuk, chief of the Political Administration of the Western Group of Soviet Forces, by Rainer Funke and Rene Heilig; place and date not given: "Plans for Troop Withdrawal Are Being Observed—Despite Many Obstacles"]

[Text] [NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] The Western Group will withdraw 30 percent of its troops and staffs from Germany this year—will they all be withdrawn by sea?

[Grebenyuk] At the moment, we do not have any other choice because of the rigid Polish attitude. This could change, but so far there is has also been a lack of diplomatic support from the FRG Government. They say that this is our problem. The plans for troop withdrawal will be fulfilled in line with the treaty, regardless of the obstacles that may arise. The personnel will be transported by plane anyway, the technical equipment will be transported by sea. Of course, this means additional costs—in financial, material, and organizational terms. Originally, we proceeded on the premise of transportation by land.

The sea route is much longer. Let us imagine: Our troops stationed in Neuruppin will be transferred to the Ukraine. Via Poland they would be practically close by. Now we are forced to transfer our troops to Mukran and Rostock, to load them on ships there, and then to take them to Leningrad by sea, and then take them from the north to the south. One can easily imagine how much more complicated that is. This is what I meant by referring to additional costs.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] Thus, the tickets will be much more expensive. Would it not also be possible to go via the CSFR?

[Grebenyuk] Possible yes, but this presupposes corresponding negotiations and decisions. We are also withdrawing our troops from there.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] Poland's Senate spokesman made the march through Poland dependent on the provision that before that all 50,000 Soviet soldiers have to be withdrawn from this country.

[Grebenyuk] Of course, one can pose conditions that are acceptable or unacceptable. The Polish side simply does not take some facts into account. The Soviet troops stationed in Poland must contribute their share to the withdrawal of the Western Group: material-technical supplies, medical care, and the regulation of the marching columns.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] Soldiers and officers who have returned home from Hungary live in tents, their families in barracks. And now the Western Group is also on its way....

[Grebenyuk] You certainly get description from the mass media. I would like to propose that you visit these villages yourself. Whatever you have read or seen is very far removed from the truth. I do not want to play down the problems of accommodation. After all, 60 percent of our officers and warrant officers do not have housing in the USSR, but our government and the Defense Ministry are doing what they can. If soldiers still live in tents, this is not typical and will be only for a short period. This applies, above all, to those units that will be disbanded. Generally, the units stationed in the USSR take care of accommodation.

Life in tents is not abnormal for soldiers doing basic military service, for instance during training or exercises. Other units will be restructured or are waiting to be transferred to new garrisons. There are also so-called barracks that are suitable to live in.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] There is also a lack of kindergartens, schools, shops, services.... Jobs are scarce.

[Grebenyuk] Of course, there are problems with jobs and with the social and cultural infrastructure. This affects, above all, members of the soldiers' families, because there are locations that are a long way away from the places where there are jobs. These problems are not exclusively a result of the withdrawal, but they are complicated by it.

If you talk about these difficulties, please pay attention to the following fact: How many additional difficulties are our people accepting by fulfilling the treaty on withdrawal. If we had accepted the obligation to withdraw the troops by the year 2000, we would perhaps have houses instead of barracks, perhaps also those that are to be built with the money supplied by the FRG. But this year we will withdraw 150,000 people, including 15,000 officers and 10,000 warrant officers. None of them can move into a house that is to be built with means from the FRG. So far, not a single one has been built. Thus, we are accepting additional obligations. This creates additional problems. This should perhaps also be taken into account and should meet with understanding.

Our relations with the German side are not very smooth, either. Many procedures in the cooperation have not yet been clarified. This also applies to the use of the Soviet property.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] That is, the handing over or taking over of facilities?

[Grebenyuk] Yes. But also cooperation with the justice organs, the police, and others.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] But the FRG Government "only" decided on a Gulf war tax, not on a withdrawal tax for the Soviet Union. There seems to be no hope of getting more payments. But the things that the soldiers can expect at home certainly have an effect on the morale of the troops. In Moscow the military demonstration in Red Square this time was not done in parade step. Were you there?

[Grebenyuk] No, I laid wreaths in honor of the dead in Berlin on Soviet Army Day. But the meeting in Moscow impressed me. It took place for the protection of the president and the protection of the unity of the state. Perestroyka is a complicated social experiment and the Army is not left out. Of course, we also have to admit mistakes, in particular in the economy. This is used by pseudo-democrats, who pursue strange antisocialist goals. And they were rejected at the above-mentioned demonstration, particularly those people who are fanning hysteria against the Army under the cover of nationalist ideas. The Armed Forces will not let themselves be branded as the brakers of renewal. My thoughts were with the demonstrators in Moscow.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] Colonel General Burlakov, commander in chief of the Western Group, has held many talks with German politicians over the past few days. However, only empty communiques were issued. What were the topics of the talks?

[Grebenyuk] The commander in chief met, for instance, with Stoltenberg and Admiral Wellershoff. He was in the Interior Ministry and in the Finance Ministry. He had talks in the Bundeswehr Command East. The issues were agreements concerning transportation, aviation rights over German territory, and unclear technical and financial questions. Of course, aspects emerged that require a topical clarification and mutual understanding. Comrade Burlakov thinks that this understanding and the readiness for constructive cooperation exist.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] If, in our interview, we want to go beyond any announcements that have been made so far, there arises the question: Why was Army General Snetkov, the previous commander in chief, replaced so suddenly? It could not have been because of two officers who defected with new weapons....

[Grebenyuk] Not suddenly—the desertion of the officers was only a coincidence in terms of time. That is why there were irritations. Comrade Snetkov is a very experienced, talented military man and enjoys the utmost respect in the Armed Forces. But he is also very old. Therefore, he repeatedly asked to be replaced, even before Germany's unification.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] But he was not an old general in Soviet terms. He was just 65. Now the Western Group also has diplomatic tasks. Does this yield an answer?

[Grebenyuk] We are, above all, soldiers, part of the Soviet Armed Forces, and not diplomats or tourists.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] In the past some German politicians feared that Soviet troops would invade the FRG. Now they have their positions there. In a country that belongs to NATO. The military organization of the Warsaw Pact no longer exists. Are you really still a functioning part of the Soviet Army?

[Grebenyuk] Of course! We have to fulfill our tasks in line with the specific situation.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] That is, withdrawal?

[Grebenyuk] We will withdraw one-third this year. Two-thirds are not just waiting for the date of embarkation. There is training, and we must guarantee a certain level of combat capability. The specific conditions are another question.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] However, the special conditions also have advantages. In the "big country" there are trends toward division, individual republics want to or already have eliminated the term "socialist," they want to be separate. What is to become of the unified Soviet Army? If it crumbles, who will then have command of, for instance, nuclear weapons?

[Grebenyuk] It is simply not permissible that every republic has its own army. Every sensible person knows that this is not acceptable. Guaranteeing our country's defense capability is the task of the center, the central leadership. All those who are calling for national armies abuse nationalist feelings of the people. This is populism, this is not realistic.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] However, the conflict exists. Let us take a look at the results of the referendums in the Baltic republics.

[Grebenyuk] However, there are also people in these republics who are for the preservation of the Union, for a renewed Union.... A considerable part.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] The referendums were not able to produce any majorities for that....

[Grebenyuk] I claim that the referendum does not reflect the range of opinions. The questions were asked skillfully, for instance: Do you want an independent state, a sovereign republic? Everyone naturally is for that. But this question does not contain any position concerning the Union. And this is no coincidence. In any case, we will contribute to preserving the Union.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] We? Is this the Army?

[Grebenyuk] The Soviet people. We have never separated the Army from the people.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] Which does not rule out clashes—even bloody ones—with parts of the people.

[Grebenyuk] Do not look at that just from one side. Separatist forces are abusing the situation. So-called gangs, armed groups. The Army is not against the people. It is its task to defend the country and to ensure the security of the Soviet people. Furthermore, the militias and the troops of the Interior Ministry are responsible for dealing with internal conflicts. When they were not able to master their tasks, the Army was sent in. This prevented a tragic end to the events and protected the honor of our people. The soldiers acted with determination, patiently, with courage, and with humanism.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] How long will the Army continue to fulfill domestic tasks?

[Grebenyuk] At the moment, the Army is no longer fulfilling any functions of the militia. But I stress that every state is entitled to use all possible means to protect the people's lives.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] Another topic. What is true about the claims that Soviet soldiers are beaten, even beaten to death? How many soldiers have deserted?

[Grebenyuk] Fairy tales. Journalists should face the truth. Rumors are of no use to anyone, in particular not in the spirit of the treaties that have been concluded. Do you know a single army where there are no violations of discipline? I do not. However, if a soldier leaves his unit with his weapon without permission, we tell the police. There is no reason to do so at the moment.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] You say that no soldier has deserted at the moment?

[Grebenyuk] No soldier has left his unit with his weapon without permission.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] And without his weapon?

[Grebenyuk] In 1990 about 150 soldiers deserted. Since the beginning of the year we have been looking for 12 soldiers. We know where they are. They are not handed over to us because they have allegedly asked for political asylum. They committed various crimes in army units and want to escape from military justice in this way. The Berlin police president refuses us any contact. Not even the brother of one of the solders in custody was given permission to speak to him.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] One hears of attempts to bring the deserters back by force.

[Grebenyuk] This is not true. We only follow official paths.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] Once again back to the above-mentioned deaths in the Western Group. How many have their been since the beginning of the year?

[Grebenyuk] Unfortunately, accidents happen in such a big force. Technical equipment, traffic accidents. Safety regulations are simply not observed. In total, we have had 10 deaths this year.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] The Western Group leaves ecological problems.

[Grebenyuk] You may tell your readers that we are doing the utmost to minimize the damage. However, if you transfer a Bundeswehr unit, you will also find ecological problems at its former location. Many locations were already barracks of the German kaiser and the Wehrmacht. It is hard to say who caused more damage. However, the problem concerns both sides. We have to repair the damage together. We understand that and we are doing whatever is possible.

[NEUES DEUTSCHLAND] What about Erich Honecker. He has been under your protection for months. The Berlin public prosecutor has tried to get him transferred. What will happen in this matter? Are there any agreements?

[Grebenyuk] Not from the Western Group's side. We are doing everything for Erich Honecker's medical care. This is a purely humanitarian matter. We believe that this is right.

Latin America & Caribbean

Political, Economic Conditions in Cuba Viewed

PM0703131191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 6 Mar 91 p 3

[Correspondent Ye. Umerenkov report: "Cuba: The Special Period Set to Last a Long Time"]

[Text] Havana-Mexico City—Dominoes are falling one against another. Seven are already down. Just one, the last one, remains standing, but with a noticeable tilt. A flag is depicted on the surface of each domino. Seven prostrated flags of former socialist countries. The domino with the Soviet flag will either topple in an instant, following the rest, or it will nonetheless hold out—everyone is free to imagine his own ending. This was a canvas with a very simple political educational message that greeted me in a room of the National Museum in the Cuban capital, devoted to an exhibition of avant-garde works by members of the country's creative union. I admit I have a poor understanding of the avant-garde, yet here I did understand some things. Although I was, of course, offended with regard to the flag.

Everyone on His Bicycle!

"You know, the Soviet Union is such a big and rich country that you will certainly resolve your own problems. We believe this," Frank Gonzalez of PRENSA LATINA told me with conviction. A few hours later, at a meeting with representatives of one of Havana's construction microbrigades, a National Assembly deputy explained to us, a group of foreign journalists, the reasons for Cuba's present economic difficulties: "Previously we obtained the majority of essential commodities and equipment from the countries of the socialist camp. Where is that camp now? Everyone knows."

It is obvious that the events of the past two years in East Europe and the Soviet Union have affected Cuba's economic and political situation. The consequences of the years-long U.S. economic blockade were not so palpable when ships laden with goods were sailing to and from the East. The "world economic system of socialism" included the distant Latin American state in its structures and supported it as long as it itself remained afloat. Then suddenly the East European countries simultaneously dropped out of the "system" into the market economy. Instead of ideological fraternity, the time came for arranged marriage contracts—if it is not profitable to sell or buy in Cuba, we will find another partner. In the eyes of the Cubans, the U.S. blockade received the support of the former socialist countries. A "peacetime special period" was proclaimed in the country.

Its essence is explained as follows: Without abandoning the tasks of the country's development, to concentrate efforts in areas which will enable Cuba to emerge from the economic dependence which it has always experienced to one degree or another—first, before the revolution, dependence on the United States, and then on the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. The main areas defined by the leadership include a food plan, with whose help the country is to achieve self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs, the development of foreign tourism as an important source of badly needed currency revenue, and health care—one of Cuba's most significant social achievements over the past 30 years. In all other respects—economic austerity, strictly centralized distribution of material and monetary resources, and a rationing system for supplying the population.

One way or another the "peacetime special period" has affected the lives of all Cubans. The preparations which are constantly being made on the island against possible armed aggression have been supplemented by a number of measures of an economic and administrative nature. The rector of Jose Antonio Echeverria Higher Polytechnical Institute explained to us each of the 14 points of a special plan drawn up at the institute for the "special period." They include selling bicycles to students and teachers (1,400 bicycles have already been sold), saving fuel (by 50 percent) and electricity (by 10 percent), reducing paper consumption, mobilizing students for agricultural work, and preparing to defend the institute building. The last point in the plan is "to prepare for the next stage of the special period." This means that people here believe that it will last a long time...

Fidel! Party! Youth!

It is not easy to buy a newspaper in Havana in the morning. Yes, a newspaper. In the singular. The party organ GRANMA alone continues to be published as a national daily newspaper. There are difficulties with paper. Like everything that used to be bought for the mythical transferrable rubles, paper now has to be obtained for currency.

GRANMA is the official organ of the PCC [Communist Party of Cuba]. It is quite difficult for it to conduct polemics with itself. Not that polemics are of any use when the "special period" demands cohesion, not disorderly thoughts. In the opinion of the Cubans with whom I have spoken, it is most interesting to read the youth newspaper JUVENTUD REBELDE—it publishes materials on pointed topics, conducts sociological polls, and speaks of what was only recently thought "not to exist" in Cuba.

This was the reply of Cuban Culture Minister Armando Hart Davalos when asked why sales of certain Soviet newspapers and magazines have been stopped in the country: "We cannot allow ideas which are alien to the Cuban revolution and its principles to be instilled under the name of democracy and socialism." The country's leadership believes that principles must not be waived.

Cuban Higher Education Minister Fernando Vecino Alegret said, stressing every word: "We learned three main things at the University Students Federation Congress last December: Cuban youth is for socialism, for a united party, for Fidel's leadership!"

Federation President Carmen Rosa Baez recalled the ovation Fidel Castro got at the congress. This undoubtedly confirms the education minister's words.

How did her friends perceive the events in East Europe?—I asked Carmen.

"This was a great blow to us. We know what capitalism is like. Maybe they have forgotten."

Cuban Communists believe that capitalism in Cuba was unable to resolve the country's problems. Rather, as Armando Hart explained at the meeting with us, back at the turn of the century the United States did not permit the free development of capitalism in Cuba. And the model of dependent capitalism, which is well known in Latin America, is incapable of giving the people what the revolution has given them—education available to all, free health care, guaranteed work, and a sense of their own dignity. So the only path for the republic is socialism.

Since capitalism was not allowed to develop freely on the island, there were no conditions for the emergence of "classic" bourgeois parties. Therefore the one-party system which took shape in Cuba after the revolution was historically justified and conditioned. Well, we know this.

A Reformed Person Is to Be Believed

Thus, three principles which are not questioned and which the people, as the leadership firmly believes, unconditionally support. Of course, there have been mistakes too, but the movement to "correct mistakes and combat negative trends" was developed in the country in 1986.

One mistake, for example, was the creation of free peasant markets in addition to state markets. The prices were exorbitant, but it was always possible to buy vegetables and fruit. What happened? Middlemen very quickly amassed an entire fortune. They had houses built for themselves and had two or three cars each. The peasant markets were banned. In the interests of the working people, who were indignant at the middlemen's machinations.

A number of major miscalculations were made in agriculture in general. And so difficulties arose over food. Donaldo Jardines, director of a state agricultural farm, spoke of the main problem—the lack of work hands in the countryside. For a long time a peasant received less than a city dweller earned. And working conditions in agriculture are known to be harder. The countryside has become depopulated. It is now necessary to rely on volunteers from the city.

It is now reckoned possible to attract people back to the rural life: The restrictions on wages for agricultural workers have been removed, and they are ready to provide housing for those who move permanently from the city. They can buy a refrigerator and a television set without waiting in line. Hopes are high, for the director has set the task, for example, of achieving production of 80 kg of bananas per person per year. This will be one of the highest indicators in the world. I asked Donaldo whether it is proposed to allow local producers to lease state land to fulfill the food plan. "No, for ours is a socialist country."

It was explained to me that the adoption in 1976 of "the new system of management and planning in the economy" was a very serious mistake. The Soviet experience of economic building was taken as the basis. It brought us to the need to restructure what had been built. It cost the Cubans an inevitable manifestation of the "birthmarks" of state socialism: rigid centralization, planning dictated by ideological principles, the bureaucratization of management, the undermining of labor incentives. When we suddenly realized that "developed socialism" had turned from "the party's most important theoretical achievement of recent years" into the cause of the wretchedness of our life, people in Cuba naturally felt they had been deluded, to put it mildly.

We Will Take Our Own Path

In my opinion, it is not worth describing the endless lines, the total scarcity, the services proud of their superiority over their clients, the flourishing black market—that which so attracts the attention of Western journalists who find themselves in Cuba. We know all this perfectly well from our own experience. It is more important to try to understand why things in Cuba are precisely like this, and not otherwise.

What is the reason for such a rapid collapse of the former power structures in East European countries? Cubans believe that it is their initial weakness as a power not "legitimated" by the historical experience of those countries' peoples. Cuba is a different matter. Here the revolution took place without outside assistance, and the "favorable external factor" only came into play later. According to this logic, the Russian revolution, which was accomplished by the people themselves, also has a reserve of strength. Maybe this is why our "domino" is still standing in that picture? It has tilted, but it is standing. The Cuban one is standing too, although a place was not found for it on the canvas. Or maybe it was not found because the political principle of dominoes is permitted here only with regard to East Europe. And this slogan has been freshly painted on the walls of houses in Havana: "Socialism or Death!"

Now about changes. The Soviet Union, I was told, can afford to try to change everything at once—it is a big state. But Cuba is a small country. It has a strong enemy nearby. And so "we must implement changes without chaos. Chaos will cost us the revolution." The gradual and homegrown nature of the changes must guarantee that nothing like the East European events happens in Cuba.

What, then, is changing? A gradual democratization is taking place: In the elections for local organs of power, for example, two or three candidates have long been nominated for each seat, although there is a one-party system in the country. The party's Central Committee apparatus has been cut by half. The majority of functionaries who have lost their posts are returning to work in their own specialized field. The involvement of foreign capital in the economy is now permitted, chiefly in the construction of foreign tourism projects. Great hopes are pinned on the Fourth PCC Congress, due this year. Important decisions, which will define the strategy of the planned reforms, are expected to be adopted there.

But the living standards of ordinary Cubans are also gradually worsening. Prices are rising while wages are fixed, and goods are vanishing from the stores. No, no one on the island is starving—everyone gets the necessary norm of calories per day defined by medics. With ration cards. Footwear and clothes too. Cubans are full of joie de vivre and, unlike us, they behave more patiently in lines.

Yet it is explained that the difficulties are objective too. What is the economic blockade like? If the Americans learn that the Cubans intend to conclude an agreement with any West European or, let us say, Canadian firm, they are sure to try to wreck the deal. The GDR was one of Cuba's main trading partners. Now there is simply no such state. And look how the Soviet Union honors its delivery pledges. Take oil, and see what problems arise because of this. Of course, it has its own difficulties. But then, moreover, if it is necessary to pull belts tighter, a new "hole" is being made in them by circumstances which simply cannot be influenced. It is necessary to endure it, having total confidence in the leadership's course.

As of this year, Soviet-Cuban trade and economic relations are being built on a new basis—world market prices and transactions in currency. Of course, it will take time to make the full switch to this, but the principle has been defined. There is a lot of talk in our country now about whether or not our trade with Cuba is profitable. The lack of information probably tells here too. Yes, we buy sugar at inflated contract prices. But during the last five-year plan period the Cubans overpaid us for oil, for example, if you take into account the drop in prices on the world oil market. Of course, Cuba is greatly in debt to us. During the five previous years credits to balance commodity turnover totaled 4 billion rubles. But they were credits, not free aid. Cuba can be a profitable trading partner. It is no coincidence that some of our oblasts and republics are now establishing direct ties with it. Cuban medical supplies and equipment and biotechnological products worth almost $800 million have been received this year.

I do not believe that the 30 years of our friendly relations can be canceled out. During this time something greater and purely human has arisen behind the official facade of "solidarity with the struggling people." It is largely through Cuba that we have gotten to know and perceived Latin America. It has also been a bridge in the other direction. We have something with which to fill the incipient vacuum of ideological notions which are no longer capable of being the "cementing basis" of relations between the two countries' peoples...

Supreme Soviet

Supreme Soviet Opens With Debate Over Yeltsin

LD1103091491 Moscow TASS in English 0859 GMT 11 Mar 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 11 TASS—Today's session of the Soviet parliament began with sharp clashes of opinions concerning Russian parliament President Boris Yelstin's speech on Saturday. He had called for declaring a "war on the country's leadership" at a meeting of Democratic Russian movement activists.

Some deputies suggested that "Boris Yeltsin's anti-Soviet speech be listened to" and given a political appraisal. Others opposed, saying that this would be a good advertisement for Yeltsin, which is the purpose of his speech.

Deputies from the Inter-Regional Group (which is actually headed by Yeltsin) called for "looking for real culprits of the crisis in the USSR".

During the debate, an interpellation was addressed to USSR Procurator-General Nikolay Trubin to appraise whether Yeltsin's statement was constitutional (the constitution forbids calls for a violent overthrow of legitimate bodies of power).

After an exchange of opinions, it was decided to listen to a tape with Yeltsin's speech during an interval and then to return to this issue.

Then, the Soviet parliament began debating the bill on the order of settling individual labour disputes in its second reading.

Debate Postponed on Yeltsin Speech

LD1103132391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] This is not the first time that the actions of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian parliament, have provoked turbulent debates in the Soviet parliament. So this morning, the joint session of the chambers opened with a proposal to discuss his sharp speech at the meeting of Russian democratic and political movements Saturday at the Moscow House of Theater. But, the deputies were divided. Many of them believed that the USSR parliament must not react to speeches by politicians. On the other hand, an exchange of opinions could be held in the framework of a general political debate on the situation in the country. The results of the vote showed that most parliamentarians were in favor of hearing a full text of the recorded speech by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. As to the debates on the speech, they have been postponed.

The parliamentarians considered in the second reading legal acts on regulation of the mechanism for resolving labor conflicts, that is, draft laws on procedures for resolving individual labor disputes. After a brief debate, the law on procedure for resolving individual labor disputes was adopted.

Labor and Draft Laws on Agenda

LD1003194491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1900 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] The USSR Supreme Soviet session continues tomorrow. Over the next two days, deputies intend to discuss two important draft laws:

The first of them concerns the procedure for settling individual labor disputes. Naturally, this will also require alterations and additions to USSR labor legislation.

It is also planned to complete work on the draft law on the country's Cabinet of Ministers, and then, 13-18 March, USSR people's deputies will work in their constituencies on implementation of the law on the USSR referendum.

Political & Social

Revised Draft Union Treaty Published

PM0803203191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 9 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

["Draft Treaty on the Union of Sovereign Republics"—IZVESTIYA headline]

[Text] The sovereign republics parties to the Treaty, expressing their peoples' will to renew the Union; recognizing the right of the nations and peoples to self-determination; proceeding from the declarations of state sovereignty proclaimed by the republics; taking into account the proximity of their historical destinies, seeking to live in friendship and accord, and ensuring equitable cooperation; wishing to create conditions for the all-around development of each individual and for ensuring reliable guarantees of the individual's rights and freedoms; concerned for the material well-being and spiritual development of the peoples, the mutual enrichment of national cultures, and the guaranteeing of common security; learning the lessons of the past and taking into account changes in the life of the country and throughout the world; have resolved to build their relations on new principles within a Union of Soviet socialist Republics [USSR]. [Editorial note: throughout this draft of the treaty the formulation used is "Soyuz SSR" rendered here as USSR. In the former draft the wording "Union of Sovereign Soviet Republics" was used in the first instance.

I. Basic Principles

First. Each republic party to the Treaty is a sovereign state. The USSR is a sovereign federal democratic state formed as a result of a voluntary association of equal republics and exercising state power within the limits of the powers vested in it by the parties to the Treaty.

Second. The republics forming the Union reserve the right to the autonomous solution of all questions of their development and guarantee political rights and opportunities for socioeconomic and cultural development to all the peoples living on their territory. The republics will resolutely oppose racism, chauvinism, nationalism, and any attempts to restrict the peoples' rights. The parties to the Treaty will proceed from the combination of pan-human and national values.

Third. The republics recognize as a most important principle the priority of human rights in accordance with the generally recognized norms of international law. All citizens are guaranteed the opportunity to study and use their native language, unhampered access to information, freedom of religion, and other political, socioeconomic, and individual rights and freedoms.

Fourth. The republics see the formation and development of a civil society as a most important condition of freedom and well-being. They will seek the satisfaction of people's needs on the basis of a free choice of forms of ownership and methods of economic activity and realization of the principles of social justice and protection.

Fifth. The republics forming the Union possess the full range of state power and autonomously determine their national-state and administrative-territorial structure [ustroystvo] and system of organs of power and administration. They recognize the common fundamental principle of democracy based on popular representation and the direct expression of the peoples' will and seek the creation of a rule-of-law state acting as guarantor against any tendencies toward authoritarianism and tyranny.

Sixth. The republics consider the preservation and development of national traditions and state support for education, science, and culture to be one of the most important tasks. They will promote the intensive exchange and mutual enrichment of humanist spiritual values among the peoples of the country and the whole world.

Seventh. The parties to the treaty state that the Union's main aims in the international arena are lasting peace, the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and cooperation among states and solidarity among the peoples in resolving mankind's global problems

The republics are fully-fledged members of the international community. They are entitled to establish direct diplomatic, consular, trade, and other ties with foreign states, exchange official missions with them, conclude international treaties, and participate directly in the activity of international organizations without infringing the interests of the parties to the present treaty and their common interests or violating the USSR's international commitments.

II. Structure of the Union

Article 1. Membership of the USSR

The republics' membership of the USSR is voluntary. The republics parties to the Treaty have equal rights and equal obligations.

The republics parties to the treaty belong to the Union directly, or as part of [v sostave] other republics, not encroaching on their rights or relieve them of duties under the Treaty.

Relations between republics, one forming part of the other, are regulated by treaties and agreements between them.

The USSR is open for membership to other sovereign states which recognize the treaty. The decision on the acceptance into the Union of new members is adopted with the consent of all the parties to the treaty.

The republics parties to the treaty have the right of free secession from the Union in the manner prescribed by the parties to the treaty.

Article 2. Citizenship

A citizen of a republic belonging to the USSR is at the same time a citizen of the USSR.

Citizens of the USSR have equal rights and duties, enshrined in the Constitution, laws, and international treaties of the USSR.

Article 3. Territory

The territory of the USSR consists of the territories of all the republics parties to the treaty.

Republics belonging to the Union recognize the borders existing between them at the moment of signing the treaty.

Borders between republics may only be changed by agreement between them.

Article 4. Relations Between Republics

Relations between republics are regulated by the present treaty and other treaties and agreements that do not contravene it.

The republics parties to the Treaty build their mutual relations within the Union on the basis of equality, respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, noninterference in internal affairs, resolution of all disputes by peaceful means, cooperation, mutual assistance, and conscientious fulfillment of commitments under the Union Treaty and interrepublic agreements.

It is incumbent on the republics party to the treaty not to use force or the threat of force against one another, not to commit any acts of violence, and not to infringe other republics' territorial integrity.

It is incumbent on republics not to permit the siting on their territory of armed formations and military bases of foreign states, and not to conclude agreements contrary to the aims of the Union or directed against the interests of its constituent republics.

Article 5. Demarcation of the Powers in the USSR

Parties to the Treaty invest the USSR with the following powers:
—the protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Union and its constituent republics;

—The safeguarding of the state security of the USSR; the definition and protection of the USSR State Border; and the changing of the USSR State Border with the consent of the relevant republic;
—The organization of the defense and the leadership of the USSR Armed Forces, and border, internal, and railroad troops of the USSR; and the declaration of war and the conclusion of peace;
—The leadership of defense enterprises and organizations in the creation and production of armaments and military hardware;
—The implementation of unionwide foreign policy; representation in relations with foreign states and international organizations; the conclusion of the USSR's international treaties; the coordination of the foreign policy activity of the Union and the republics;
—The implementation of foreign economic activity within the limits of the USSR's powers;
—The approval and execution of the union budget;
—The management of space research, unionwide communications and information systems, geodesy, cartography, metrology, and establishment of standards;
—Monitoring the observance of the Constitution and Laws of the USSR; the adoption of legislation on questions under the jurisdiction of the Union; the establishment of the fundamentals of legislation on questions coordinated with the republics;
—The coordination of activity to protect public order and combat crime.

The USSR together with the republics exercises the following powers;
—The adoption of the USSR Constitution and the introduction of amendments and additions to it; and the guaranteeing of the rights and freedoms of USSR citizens;
—Defining the USSR's foreign policy course and monitoring its implementation through a system of supreme organs of state power of the Union; the protection of the rights and interests of the citizens of the USSR and the republics in international relations; the establishment of the bases of foreign economic activity; a single customs system; the exercise of the sovereign rights of the Union and the republics to the natural wealth of the economic zone and continental shelf of the USSR;
—The definition of the state security strategy of the USSR and the republics belonging to it; ensuring the state security of members of the Union; establishing a regime for the state border of the USSR and the sea and air space of the USSR;
—Defining the USSR's military policy; implementing measures in organizing and ensuring the defense of the USSR; resolving questions connected with the stationing [dislokatsiya] and activity of troops and military installations on the territory of the republics; establishing a single procedure for the draft and performance of military service; and organizing the mobilization preparation [mobilizatsionnaya podgotovka] of the national economy;
—Defining the strategy for the socioeconomic development of the country and creating conditions for the development of the unionwide market; pursuing a single financial, credit, monetary, taxation, and price policy based on a common currency; the compilation of the union budget and the monitoring of its execution; the utilization of the gold reserves and the diamond and currency stocks of the USSR; the elaboration and implementation of unionwide programs, the creation of unionwide funds for regional development and for the elimination of the consequences of natural disasters and catastrophes, and other funds coordinated with the republics and the management of them; the granting of assistance to foreign states and the conclusion of agreements on international loans and credits; and the regulation of the foreign and domestic state debts;
—The leadership of defense enterprises and organizations in the creation and production of civilian output;
—The management of a unified fuel and energy system for the country and of railroad, air, maritime, and main pipeline transportation;
—The establishment of the basic principles for the utilization of natural resources and the protection of the environment, and the conduct of a coordinated ecological policy;
—The establishment of the bases of social policy, including questions pertaining to employment and migration, working conditions, labor protection, social security and insurance, public education, health, and the protection of the family, mothers, and children; the guaranteed provision of a minimum subsistence level; and the promotion of the development of culture;
—Ensuring that small nations preserve their ancient homelands and necessary conditions for their economic and cultural development;
—The organization and implementation of basic scientific research and the stimulation of scientific and technical progress; the definition of policy and the basic principles of its implementation in developing higher education and the training and certification of top category scientific and teaching cadres.

The powers defined by the present article may only be changed with the consent of all the republics parties to the Union Treaty.

Disputes on questions of the implementation of the USSR's powers or the exercises of rights or execution of obligations in the sphere of the joint powers of the USSR and republics are resolved through conciliation procedures. In the event that accord is not reached the disputes are subitted to the USSR Constitution Court for examination.

Article 6. Participation by the Republics in the Implementation of the Union's Powers

The republics participate in the implementation of the USSR's powers through the joint formation of union organs and the creation of other mechanisms and procedures for the coordination of interests and actions.

Each republic can, through the conclusion of an agreement with the USSR, additionally delegate to the USSR the exercise of certain of its powers and the Union, with the consent of all republics, can transfer to one or several of them the implementation of certain of its powers on their territories.

Article 7. Ownership

The USSR and the republics guarantee the free development and defense of all forms of ownership provided by the legislation of the USSR and the republics and promote the functioning of a single unionwide market.

The republics are the owners of the land, its subsoil and other natural resources on their territory and also of state property with the exception of that portion of it that is contractually assigned to the Union for the exercise of the powers entrusted to it.

Union property is used and increased exclusively in the common interests of the republics including the harmonization of the levels of their socioeconomic development.

The republics are entitled to their share of the gold, diamond, and currency reserves of the USSR and take part in their utilization.

The use of the land, its subsoil, and other natural resources for the exercise of the Union's powers is implemented within the framework of the law of the republics which create the necessary conditions for the activity of the USSR.

Article 8. Taxes and Levies

The republics autonomously set taxes and levies and determine their budget.

For the implementation of the USSR's powers, union taxes and levies are set at rates determined by agreement with the republics and proportional contributions to unionwide programs are established with their volume and purpose regulated by annual agreement between the Union and the republics taking into account the indicators of their socioeconomic development.

Article 9. USSR Constitution

The Union Treaty is the basis of the USSR Constitution.

The USSR Constitution shall be adopted by a Congress of representatives of states party to the treaty.

The USSR Constitution may not contravene the Union Treaty.

Article 10. Laws

The laws of the USSR and the constitutions and laws of the republics may not contravene the provisions of the Union Treaty.

Laws of the USSR on questions within its competence take precedence and are mandatory for execution on the territory of all republics.

The laws of a republic take precedence on its territory on all questions except those ascribed to the Union's jurisdiction.

Laws of the USSR on questions ascribed to the joint jurisdiction of the USSR and the republics enter into force if no objection is lodged by a republic whose interests are affected by the said laws.

A republic is entitled to challenge a USSR law if it violates the Union Treaty, contravenes the constitution of the republic and also its laws adopted within the limits of its powers. The USSR is entitled to challenge a republic's laws if they violate the Union Treaty or contravene the USSR Constitution or the laws of the USSR adopted within the limits of its powers. In both cases disputes are resolved by conciliation procedures or are passed to the USSR Constitutional Court.

III. Organs of the Union

Article 11. Formation of the Organs of the Union

Union organs of power and administration are formed on the basis of the representation of the republics and function strictly in accordance with this treaty's provisions.

Article 12. USSR Supreme Soviet

Legislative power in the Union is exercised by the USSR Supreme Soviet, consisting of two chambers;

The Soviet of the Republics, the upper chamber of the USSR Supreme Soviet, is formed from an equal number of representatives elected in the republics directly belonging to the Union.

The Soviet of the Union, the lower chamber of the USSR Supreme Soviet, is elected by the entire country's population in electoral districts with an equal number of voters.

The representation of all national-territorial formations in the USSR Supreme Soviet is guaranteed.

Alternative Variant:

(The Union's legislative activity shall be exercised by the USSR Supreme Soviet, which consists of two chambers;

The USSR Supreme Soviet Soviet of the Republics is formed from an equal number of representatives elected in the republics parties to this treaty.

The USSR Supreme Soviet Soviet of the Union is elected by the whole country's population in electoral districts with an equal number of voters.

The representation of all national-territorial formations in the USSR Supreme Soviet is guaranteed.)

Article 13. The USSR President

The USSR president is the head of the union state exercising supreme executive and administrative power.

The USSR president is the guarantor of the observance of the Union Treaty and of the USSR Constitution and laws; he is Commander-in-Chief of the USSR Armed Forces; he represents the Union in relations with foreign countries and monitors the performance of the USSR's international commitments.

The president is elected by Union citizens on the basis of universal, equal, and direct suffrage by secret ballot for a term of 5 years and for no more than two successive terms. The candidate who receives more than one-half of the votes cast in the Union as a whole and in the majority of the republics shall be deemed elected.

Article 14. USSR Vice President

The USSR vice president is elected at the same time as the USSR president. The USSR vice president exercises individual functions of the USSR president as delegated by the latter, and deputizes for the USSR president in the event of his absence or inability [nevozmozhnost] to perform his duties.

Article 15. Council of the Federation

The Council of the Federation is constituted under the USSR president's leadership and comprises the USSR vice president and the presidents (supreme state officials) of the republics for the examination of the main questions of the Union's domestic and foreign policy, coordinating the republics' actions, and coordinating relations between the Union and the republics.

Article 16. USSR Cabinet of Ministers

The USSR Cabinet of Ministers is constituted by the USSR president in agreement with the USSR Supreme Soviet and comprises a prime minister, deputy prime ministers, USSR ministers, and leaders of other USSR state organs.

The heads of republic governments may take part in the work of the Cabinet of Ministers with the right to vote [s pravom reshayushchim golosom].

The USSR Cabinet of Ministers acts in accordance with the powers of the Union, is subordinate to the USSR president and is responsible [neset otvetsvennost] to the USSR Supreme Soviet.

Article 17. USSR Constitutional Court

The USSR Constitutional Court examines questions of the compliance of legislative acts of the USSR and the republics, decrees of the USSR president and the republic presidents, and normative acts of the USSR Cabinet of Ministers with the Union Treaty and USSR Constitution and also resolves disputes between the Union and the republics and among republics on the constitutionality of their legislative acts.

Article 18. Union Courts

The Union courts are the USSR Supreme Court, the USSR Supreme Court of Arbitration, and courts in the USSR Armed Forces.

The USSR Supreme Court and the USSR Supreme Court of Arbitration exercise judicial power within the limits of the Union's powers. The chairmen of republics' supreme judicial and arbitration organs are ex officio members of the USSR Supreme Court and the USSR Supreme Court of Arbitration respectively.

Article 19. USSR Prosecutor's Office

The USSR Prosecutor General and the prosecutors general (prosecutors) of the republics and prosecutors under their jurisdiction shall oversee the performance of USSR legislative acts.

The USSR Prosecutor General is appointed by and accountable to the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The prosecutors general (prosecutors) of republics are appointed by the supreme legislative organs of the republics and are ex officio members of the USSR Prosecutor's Office collegium. In their work of overseeing the execution of union laws they are accountable both to the supreme legislative organs of the republics and the USSR Prosecutor General.

IV. Concluding Provisions

Article 20. Official language of the USSR

The parties to the Treaty recognize Russian as the official language of the USSR.

Article 21. Capital of the USSR

The city of Moscow is the capital of the USSR.

Article 22. State Symbols of the USSR

The USSR has its own state emblem, flag, and anthem.

Article 23. Entry of the Union Treaty Into Force

The Union Treaty is adopted by the supreme organs of state power of the republics and enters into force from the moment of its signing by the authorized delegations of the republics. The Union Treaty is open for signing by decision of the USSR Federation Council.

The 1922 Treaty on the Formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will be deemed to have lapsed as of the same date for the republics which have signed it.

Relations between the Union and the republics which have not signed the Union Treaty shall be regulated on the basis of the existing USSR legislation and mutual commitments and agreements.

Article 24. Amendments to the Union Treaty

The Union Treaty or individual provisions thereof can be repealed, amended, or added to only with the consent of all member states of the USSR.

Article 25. Appendices to the Treaty

This treaty has appendices which set out the procedures, mechanism, and period of implementation of the articles of the treaty.

The list of appendices and the times of their preparation and signing are agreed by the republics parties to the treaty in a protocol which forms part of the treaty. [appendices and protocol not published]

Democracy Rallies in Moscow, Leningrad Reported

LD1003225191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2131 GMT 10 Mar 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] [Announcer] We are coming to the end of the news week, marked by today's rallies, organized by the Democratic Russia movement. They were biggest in Moscow and Leningrad.

At midday today, hundreds of thousands of Muscovites gathered on the Manezhnaya Square. The slogans, (?or) the majority of them, supported the line of Boris Yeltsin, leader of the Russian parliament. He was not at the rally because of sickness.

Important social and political events will take place in March in the life of both Russia and the whole country. They are the referendum of 17 March and the extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] People's Deputy Yuriy Afanasyev expressed hope that the Democratic Russia movement would come out of these events strengthened. Telman Gdlyan announced the creation of a People's Party of Russia [Narodnaya Partiya Rossii]. There were also representatives of the strike committees of the Kuzbass mines. The rally decided to support the strikers and collect money for them.

[Correspondent] Thousands of Leningraders came to the Palace Square today to express their support for the main gain of perestroyka, democracy. The speakers, who included People's deputies of all levels, supported strengthening the sovereignty of the republics, first and foremost of course, Russia, and for the renewal of democratic forces. There were appeals for a negative answer to the question in the upcoming Union referendum. Quite a lot of criticism was voiced toward the leadership of the country and the CPSU, and concern was expressed about a possible turn toward dictatorship.

300,000 at Rally

LD1003110791

[Editorial Report] Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian at 0926 GMT on 10 March carries a three-minute report by Moscow correspondent Kirill Shakhnovich from Manezhnaya Square where Muscovites have gathered to participate "in the all-Russia rally and action in support of Boris Yeltsin." They have come there in columns from Ploshchad Vostanniye and Oktyabrskaya Ploshchad.

"Well, at 1200, according to my estimates and the estimates of Ministry of Internal Affairs staff, there were already around 300,000 participants in that action. However, people are still arriving. Incidentally, the rally has not yet begun. It was set to begin at 1200. But, I have found out who is going to speak. There are 12 people. Among them are well-known deputies such as Afanasiyev, Gdlyan, Ryzhov, Popov, and Stankevich. Well, incidentally, Stankevich is setting up the microphone on the platform now. Perhaps he will begin the rally.

"Before the rally, I spoke with people who had come, who had assembled earlier, and just asked them what had brought them here. Well, the basis is their trust in Yeltsin, their confidence in the fact that after he is elected to the post of president of Russia there will be a normal market economy. They spoke of their support for the renewed Program-500. Incidentally, it will be examined in Russia on 15 March. Many said Yeltsin is struggling in a real way for the sovereignty and revival of Russia.

"Well, I won't say anything about the attitude of those assembled concerning Pavlov's reform. I don't think it has left anyone indifferent here. Pensioners have spoken also of subsidies, of assistance. At least, I did not meet anyone among all those I asked who did not put forward weighty arguments as to why they were lending their support, as to why they had come here to support the Democratic Russia bloc and Yeltsin.

"There are many slogans, many flags of the republics, many slogans expressing support for the miners. But among other placards are those demanding a television channel for Russia, support for the election of the president. Many are devoted to the union referendum, to the attiude of those assembled to the union referendum.

"It is too early to speak of the speeches yet, because I've not heard any speeches; the rally is just beginning. But, there are a great many colleagues from Russia's radio here who told me that they will cover that whole action throughout Moscow and the whole union."

Yeltsin's Speech Played in Square

LD1003102291 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1000 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] A rally of solidarity with the Democratic Russia movement and in support of chairman of the Russian parliament and the Russian government is in progress at this moment in Moscow.

Manezhnaya Square in the capital and the adjacent streets are completely full. Moscow has never witnessed such an accumulation of demonstrators.

A tape recording of the address delivered yesterday by Comrade Yeltsin at the meeting with representatives of the democratic organizations of Russia is currently being played in the square.

Moscow Mayor, Others Speak

LD1003141191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1300 GMT 10 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Lev Aksenov]

[Text] Moscow, 10 Mar (TASS)—A mass rally of the capital's public organized by the "Democratic Russia" movement was held today in Manezhnaya Square near the Kremlin.

Several hundreds of thousands of Muscovites arrived at the square in two columns. The majority of participants' slogans in the demonstration declared support for the course of Boris Yeltsin, leader of the Russian legislature. There were also open anticommunist slogans.

A recording of part of Boris Yeltsin's speech delivered at a meeting with representatives of "Democratic Russia" that took place the previous day in Moscow was played at the meeting. The head of the Russian Federation legislature slammed the draft of a new Union treaty that was published recently in a most rigid form, and he called for the unfolding of an active fight against the course undertaken by the president of the country and the Union leadership.

Gavriil Popov, the mayor of the capital; Sergey Stankevich, his first deputy; and Nikolay Travkin, leader of the Democratic Party of Russia, spoke to participants in the demonstration.

USSR People's Deputy Telman Gdlyan proclaimed the creation of a people's party of Russia that, in his words, "will be in open opposition to the existing regime." He stated that the new party "will support the course undertaken by Boris Yeltsin and 'Democratic Russia' in the struggle for the true sovereignty of Russia." People's deputies of the Russian Federation also spoke to those present at the meeting. The representatives of the miner's strike committees from Kuzbass spoke at the meeting. A collection in support of the strikers was taken based on a proposal put forward by the organizers of the demonstration.

Calls for Gorbachev's Resignation

LD1003132791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1300 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Panovka, a TASS correspondent, has just given us an account of a rally held at Moscow's Manezhnaya Square today. At the behest of the Democratic Russia movement, reports the TASS journalist, tens of thousands of Muscovites came here to express their attitude toward the forthcoming Union referendum and the imminent price increases, and to lend their support yet again to the position of Yeltsin, chairman of Russia's Supreme Soviet. People's deputies representing the country and Russia and representatives of various political movements who spoke at the rally called upon the demonstrators to say—and I quote—a resolute no to the imperial union on 17 March. They demanded that the president and the country's leadership resign. The rally ended with a collection to help the Democratic Russia movement and striking Kuzbass miners. This was a report by a TASS correspondent.

Radio correspodents were also present at the rally and they will describe to you their impressions a bit later. According to reports that have reached our editorial office, rallies under the slogans of the Democratic Russia movement have also taken place in Leningrad and a number of other cities in the Russian Federation.

Republic Communists Meet, Consider Union

LD0903144791 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1200 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] The Central Committee of the Communist Parties of three Union republics, Russia, the Ukraine and Belorussia, have held a roundtable meeting on the problem of the preservation and renewal of the USSR, the country's destiny, and the future of the peoples. The meeting took place within the framework of the interrepublican activity, Yedinstvoc.

The main aim is the attempt of scholars, party, and soviet staff, and representatives of the creative intelligentsia to interpret the need for unity from the point of view of the history of our peoples, the economic and political situation, and the national-cultural aspects, as well as international factors, bearing in mind the necessity of having a strong state.

All those attending the meeting agreed on a single view: Russia, the Ukraine and Belorussia must, at this critical moment in the life of our fatherland, act as unifiers and founders of a renewed union. This lofty and extremely responsible role has been assigned to them by history itself.

Pro-Union Meeting Held Near Friendship Monument

LD1003115291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1020 GMT 10 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Yuriy Lodkin]

[Text] Bryansk, 10 Mar (TASS)—The participants of a many-thousand-strong internationalist meeting that took place near the Friendship Monument (500 km southwest of Moscow), where the borders of Belorussia, Russia, and the Ukraine meet, have expressed their firm support for the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The place has long been called "Slavyanskoye Pole" [Slav Field].

The stand of those present at the meeting is expressed by one of the slogans in Belorussian, Russian, and Ukraine: "USSR Yes." "Any other position is simply inconceivable in this land," USSR People's Deputy Aleksandr Voystrochenko told a TASS correspondent before the meeting. "For all the Belorussians, Russians, and Ukrainians that live here, borders were for centuries a relative notion that was understood only by means of geographical maps. That is why all the efforts undertaken by separatists to set up republican border and customs posts on the roads of friendship are being met by active counteraction by Belorussians, Russians, and Ukrainians."

The participants in the meeting have adopted an appeal to all the peoples of the USSR in which there is a call to speak in favor of the unity of the great power at a moment when a historical choice has to be made.

Lukyanov 'Alarmed' by Yeltsin Speech

LD0903200691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Studio interview with Anatoliy Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, by unidentified announcer; from the "Vremya" newscast—live]

[Text] [Announcer] We have Anatoliy Ivanovich Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, in the studio. Anatoliy Ivanovich, since this morning rumors have been going around Moscow on what was either an all-Russian meeting or an all-Russian conference taking place today, where Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin spoke.

Immediately after Radio Rossii carried this speech on its channels we started getting calls from people who were irritated, concerned, outraged, or simply intrigued by what in their opinion was the inappropriateness of the act and a very sharp and aggressive speech. What can you say with regard to this conference?

[Lukyanov] Yes, you know, we were also alarmed by this speech. I have attempted to obtain the text of it. The fact is that a meeting was held today between the representatives of various parties, the public, and entrepreneurs of Russia from various cities in the house of the Theater. There were many speeches at this meeting and among them was a speech by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. What can one say about it? It was a sharp, emotional speech, and at the same time it gives rise to very great alarm, very great alarm for the fate of our country and the fate of our society in the complex conditions it is at present experiencing.

First of all, this live speech announces that, having expressed support for the miners' strike, it is time to declare war on the country's leadership. As he says, to roll up one's sleeves, raise one's fists, and go for the country's leadership, because it does not suit the democratic forces.

What can one say here, in this complex period, when society is indeed white-hot? When there are enough matches to cause it to flare up, a leader of the highest body of authority of such a republic as Russia does not have the right, does not have the moral right, to make such declarations. This is a direct appeal for confrontation with the legally elected authority. This is a direct appeal to declare what is in fact a war on the country's leadership, those bodies that were elected by the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet. It seems to me that we cannot ignore such things.

Besides this, Boris Nikolayevich declares that that treaty, the draft Union treaty, published today, does not suit Russia, does not suit the Russian leadership, and even, on the instructions of the leadership, has not been signed by experts and representatives of the Russian Federation. Well, this is also not correct. The fact is that I myself had occasion to participate in the development of this treaty and to meet representatives of Russia. Among them there were two representatives of Russia, two chairmen of the chambers of the Russian Parliament, authorized by it to sign these documents, and, moreover, representatives of practically all the autonomous republics of the Russian Federation.

Can one really fail to take account of them? Can one really make such a statement on their behalf and now, on the eve of the all-Union referendum, when we practically have proposed that every Soviet person, every citizen express his attitude to the fate of our country, to the fate of the renewed Soviet federation, which will be a good representation, which perhaps will operate actively and equally toward each sovereign republic?

I think that in this respect, too, the address by Comrade Yeltsin cannot but evoke great alarm.

Moreover, the question is raised of a wider program of action. It is a question of staging rallies and all kinds of acts of insubordination.

The most important thing now in the soviets and in the localities is to change the leadership or to replace it by empowered representatives of the chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet who will be nominated by him directly and will, as Boris Nikolayevich said, carry out our policy.

Naturally, that address is against Soviet power in the localities. Why should that proceed through those empowered and not through bodies elected by the people implementing their will, the will of the electorate? Particularly since Boris Nikolayevich even stated—I have been given the text—he says that we are discarding those who remain there today and who want to remain first secretary of the oblast committee and chairman of the oblast soviet. No—our time limit is 15 March and on 16 March the procurator will begin the relevant proceedings against each of them. Well, there is the statement.

It seems to me that such an attitude to the local soviets, to power in the localities would mean the very serious destabilization of those bodies that have been instructed to carry out the functions of state power and administration in the localities. Therefore, even at first glance, and we obviously have to investigate this address in more detail, it cannot fail to evoke a protest.

I do not doubt that it will give rise to such a protest among the people's deputies of the USSR, also. Our session is continuing. I think that such a question will without fail be raised before them on Monday.

It seems to me that it is irresponsible now, impermissible to summon the country to confrontation. It is impermissible now to introduce even more social discord into society because these are questions of life and death for the country. These are questions of the development of our economy, of the future ways of democratizing our society—and we have not renounced them, nor are we renouncing them. That is the continuation of the war of laws, the continuation of the war of budgets, the war of the banks—nervous stress for millions and millions of people. It seems to me that this is impermissible. Our people, too, who have now learned to distingish truth from lies, have learned to distinguish between statements by political figures and their actions, will reply to an address of this kind.

Once again, I want to say that the Supreme Soviet cannot ignore this speech by the chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet.

[Announcer] Thank you, Anatoliy Ivanovich.

Moscow Food Supplies 'Unprecedentedly' Low

LD0903125691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1158 GMT 9 Mar 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] Stocks of food and industrial goods in Moscow have decreased to unprecedentedly scanty level and may be sufficient for only a few days. True, according to Luzhkov, chairman of Moscow City Soviet, special representatives have already been sent to neighboring areas, and talks there have had a positive outcome. deliveries to Moscow should increase in the next few days. This is heartening news when the shops are empty and cities are moving to a wartime ration card system.

Kryuchkov Answers Correspondents' Questions

LD0903032491 Moscow International Service in Polish 1600 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Remarks by Vladimir Aleksandrovich Kryuchkov, chairman of the USSR KGB, in response to correspondents' questions at the USSR Supreme Soviet in Moscow on 7 March—Kryuchkov remarks recorded in Russian with superimposed Polish translation]

[Text] [Announcer] A bill on state security bodies has been adopted in the first reading during separate sittings of the two chambers of the USSR Supreme Soviet. For the first time in the history of the Soviet state, the activity of these bodies acquires a legislative basis, and the country's citizens an idea about the tasks, rights, and duties of the KGB. Thereby public control of the activities of the sector becomes possible. This is of special importance for the Soviet Union, as during the several decades of Soviet power, the security sector accumulated enormous power, and was the principal tool of repression against millions of Soviet citizens. It was therefore hardly surprising that many deputies expressed fears that the KGB could become a state within a state. In view of this, subordination of the KGB becomes especially important.

That was one of the main questions asked of Vladimir Kryuchkov, KGB chairman, by journalists, during a break in yesterday's sitting of the Soviet of the Union.

[Kryuchkov] First and foremost the KGB will be subordinate to the law. I believe that is a very serious subordination. Apart from the bill in question, there will be a number of additional legal acts, where everything will be precisely defined. After all, we have both a president and the law.

[Announcer] Indeed, in accordance with the presented bill, the KGB would be subordinate to the USSR Supreme Soviet and the president, as well as the prosecutor general. But there are still suspicions, equally among deputies and journalists, that close links will remain between the KGB and the CPSU. For instance, more than once Vladimir Kryuchkov heard the allegation that the KGB provided information exclusively to the CPSU, to which he replied:

[Kryuchkov] We exchange information not only with the CPSU, but also with a number of other parties—or more precisely, public organizations that are officially registered. This is a natural process, and we and they are equally interested in it. We hold meetings, and I have to say that many views of interest to us are presented there.

[Announcer] What is the KGB head's general attitude to the demands for depoliticization and departization of his sector?

[Kryuchkov] There is Article 16, and we would like to observe it. We simply have no right to disrespect it. If the article gets changed, there will be a different position on this problem. Personally, I think that departization and depoliticization concern human rights—and in view of this, these issues have to be treated carefully, as the question arises why should I, or you, be deprived of these rights.

[Announcer] It is worth adding that Article 16 of the Act on Public Associations, which the KGB head refers to, says that military personnel and law enforcement officers in their activities are guided by the requirements of legal acts, and are not bound by decisions of political parties or mass public movements with political aims. As far as human rights and the protection of civil rights are concerned, Vladimir Kryuchkov considers them now to be the key elements in KGB activities.

[Kryuchkov] It is worth noting that our bill in virtually every other line speaks about human rights. In our activities now the point of departure is man, whereas previously we used to consider global security interests. Now we proceed from the individual, so we have made a 180-degree turn. Man is at the center of attention. This has become the basic principle. That is the most important thing.

Yanayev Discusses Union Referendum

LD0903225891

[Editorial Report] Moscow Central Television Second Program Network in Russian at 0630 GMT on 9 March broadcasts live a 60-minute edition of the "Community Channel" program, including answers by USSR Vice President Gennadiy Ivanovich Yanayev, in the Moscow studio, and A.K. Galazov, chairman of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic and first secretary of the republic's party committee, and M.B. Tsikhiyev, chairman of the republican CPSU Central Committee's Commission on Interethnic Relations, in the Vladikavkaza studio, to viewers questions read by an unidentified announcer in Moscow, and by correspondent Larisa Ramonova, in Vladikavkaza.

The Moscow announcer opens the program: "Gennadiy Ivanovich, well then, at this moment I am holding the treaty, the published treaty of the sovereign union republics printed in today's newspapers. The subject of our talk today is this treaty, and our phone-in will be devoted to the USSR referendum. Of late, work has been conducted fairly successfully, and over the last week it was extraordinarily beneficial, in the main, the work of the new agreed draft union treaty drawn up by the authorized representatives of the republic with the participation of experts from the Federation Council and the USSR Supreme Soviet. That is, the Soviet of the Federation has adopted the draft as a foundation and sent it to the Supreme Soviet and the republics for examination. This is my question to you Gennadiy Ivanovich: How do you evaluate the work done on drawing up the union treaty?"

Yanayev replies: "You know, Andrey Georgiyevich, I think that it is a great honor for me that I have been invited to participate in this television phone-in which has not completely taken shape yet. Therefore, I hope that during the broadcast I do, nonetheless, manage to exchange opinions with my colleagues from other republics. I have to say that the country truly finds itself on the eve of a very important event: the referendum that will be devoted to the country's fate as a unified country or whether we will disperse to national billets. I think the connection between the referendum and the union treaty is of a dual nature, both direct and possible, an indirect and intermediate nature. If one speaks from a strictly juridical view, the results of the referendum will not determine the country's fate, as such. During the referendum, the people will have to speak out in favor of a unified state or for individual principalities, for some kind of principles that will disperse us to national billets, so to speak. In assessing the work that has been done in drawing up the draft treaty of the union of sovereign republics published today, I must say that this was, indeed, very painstaking and serious work.

"Groups of experts were at work, to begin with, as you recall, on the draft union treaty, which was born of many alternative variants, including one of the alternative variants submitted by representatives of the democratic opposition, as well. Then, during discussions on the published draft, it was decided to gather together qualified experts and official representatives of the republics. The idea was that they would get down to work in real earnest on the draft of the union treaty. Very painstaking work was done; it was difficult work, to put it bluntly. Weaving together a multitude of points of view is not a simple business. Finally, the authorized representatives of all republics—representatives of nine classically constituted union republics—took part. I'm referring here to those republics established under our Constitution. They were joined by representatives of autonomous entities, both those proclaiming themselves to be union republics and those that have not done so. This agreed version of the draft treaty on a union of sovereign republics came into being as a result. On 6 March, this draft was discussed by the USSR Federation Council. I attended the meeting. I have to tell you that some real work was done. I was glad that the council was able to prove that it really has the capacity to be an effective body. The draft which was submitted to the Federation Council by the authorized representatives had 10 alternative points. During the discussions at the Federation Council, we managed to reach agreement on nine of the 10 points. Only one single point is not yet agreed, the question of how all the components of the federation are to have equal representation in one of the parliamentary chambers.

"I am satisfied with the work which has already been done. Everything is proceeding in accordance with the revised timetable, so to speak, the one which we mapped out at the federation council. But, on the whole, in principle, this timetable has already been revised again because the treaty on the union of sovereign republics should, I believe, have been discussed yesterday."

At 0640 GMT, the discussion switches to the Vladikavkaza studio, where Ramonova introduces Galazov and Tsikhiyev before asking them whether the republic was pressured into agreeing to the draft union treaty or whether this was dictated by the need for a single economic space.

Galazov says there was no pressure on North Ossetia, recalling that the draft union was published in the local press and was discussed by the republic's supreme soviet and by rayon soviets. He notes that the first reading of the draft union treaty was approved in principle and that North Ossetian representatives took an active part in preparing the revised draft published in the central press today. They were activated by the need for the earliest possible conclusion of the treaty, which must be accelerated, says Galazov, adding that the union treaty offers the country a way out of its profound economic and political crisis.

Tsikhiyev agrees that the treaty must be signed as soon as possible, adding that the situation in North Ossetia and the very difficult position in South Ossetia make this additionally urgent. He opposes the breakup of the Soviet Union into ethnic states and principalities, as advocated by some opponents. "I am for the union treaty, and the sooner the better," he says.

Yanayev then says: "Andrey Georgiyevich, excuse me, but first of all, I would like to welcome the appearance of our North Ossetian comrades and to answer the question which you asked about whether there had been any pressure resulting in an overall agreement at the Federation Council. I agree with the comrades—Comrade Galazov participated in this meeting of the Federation Council, and he can agree with me—that there was no pressure at all, and we were all aware of the responsibility, the colossal responsibility, toward the people to take this step and to answer the question: In what sort of state and in what way are we to continue to construct our relations? Therefore, it was just responsibility and just goodwill that made it possible for us to reach this agreement tha we are talking about with satisfaction today."

The Moscow announcer then reads a series of viewers' questions, before asking Yanayev: "Gennadiy Ivanovich, perhaps you will answer this question: Is it possible to give an opinion on the referendum without knowing circumstances the republics will enter? Why is time not being given to discuss the treaty?"

Yanayev replies: "I think the publication of the treaty of the union of sovereign republics does, indeed, give everyone the chance to determine his opinion. All the same, during the referendum we answer the main question: We come out in favor of a united state, in favor of a state. We are not discussing the form of the state structure or the nature of the structure during the referendum. And, there is the question of whether we are in a hurry to hold the referendum because we wish to assert the socialist choice. We will determine the choice of structure, the choice of the nature of the sociopolitical structure, when we sign the treaty of the union of sovereign republics. Therefore, to say that people are going blind to the referendum would be incorrect. It is another matter that evidently we should now ensure broad explanatory work among the population regarding the organization of the referendum and answer the questions arising from the referendum: how to link the wording of the questions approved by the Congress of Peoples Deputies and the USSR Supreme Soviet and those wordings which appeared during the discussion of the union's wording in individual union republics. [sentence as heard] This is the main question: it needs to be explained. All the other questions—the conditions of entry, the sovereignty of the republics, the demarcation of the competences of the center and the subjects of the federation—these are questions to be resolved during the signing of the treaty."

At 0655 GMT, the Moscow announcer reads a question from Alma-Ata: What kind of union will we be asked to vote for? The announcer points out that the Alma-Ata caller finds the referendum information far too vague, laments the fact that the brighter future the people have waited for 70 years has not arrived, and rejects voting for a referendum that represents suffering and poverty.

Galazov says people are right to be anxious, reminds that the country is in a difficult situation, and stresses that he favors a union of sovereign republics in which people feel completely free, without fearing for their lives. He adds that economic, political, and other links must be reinstated and that interethnic strife must end, before saying: "People have spoken here about South Ossetia. I consider that, if it had not been for the USSR, today the situation in South Ossetia would be still worse. I would like to take advantage of this opportunity today to express gratitude to the USSR Supreme Soviet and the RSFSR Supreme Soviet; to the governments of the USSR and the RSFSR; to all republics, oblasts, and krays which have given us moral support and which, during food shortages, are helping us with food and essential commodities. I think that, if we succeed in setting up the union of states, the union of sovereign republics envisaged in the draft of the new union treaty, Soviet citizens, irrespective of their nationality, age, or sex, will feel themselves to be freer and more protected. Therefore, for me and for many other people of my generation, there is no doubt about whether there should be a union or not. There must be a union. Only with the union will we make people free, happy, and secure."

The discussion then turns to Ramonova, who summarizes various viewers' questions on how the reinvigorated union will help defend the people in South Ossetia, before introducing a brief video report on the situation in South Ossetia. The unidentified video commentator notes that the South Ossetian civil war is into its third month and that the number of deaths there equals the number of Americans killed in the Gulf war. The commentator continues: "It is not only the roads to blockaded Tskhinvali that have been blown up. At somebody's evil behest, the threads that for centuries had brought the Georgian and Ossetian people together are being destroyed. The roads have been replaced by overgrown forest tracks. These are used by journalists heading in one direction in an effort to sort out the skein of contradictory information about the events and by people fleeing in the other direction from what they consider to be a terrible reality. The refugees are mainly women, children, and the elderly. This—the only track linking besieged Tskhinvali with the outside world—has been dubbed the accursed track by the people. Most of the curses are directed against one man: Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Ossetians say that out-and-out, unconcealed genocide began when he came to power in Georgia."

The video continues depicting the plight of South Ossetia, noting that locals blame the Georgians.

After the video, the Moscow announcer asks how the union treaty will help to resolve such conflicts.

Yanayev replies: "First, I would like to express sincere regret about the events we are forced to talk about today, the interethnic conflicts. I would say that the South Ossetian conflict, between South Ossetia and Georgia, is not an ethnic conflict but a political one. It is a political conflict, and it should be described as such. I am sorry that people are dying, and we send our sincere condolences to those whose near and dear ones have died. At the same time, I would like to say that the situation that has arisen is a direct consequence of the fact that for too long we have been in an unstable state position. I believe that in ballet there is the expression battements jetes, and I believe that the most unstable pose, position, is the third position, and the state has been kept too long in this third, unstable, position. Therefore, the state of seeming well-being, when we stated that in the USSR the nationalities problem had been fully resolved once and for all, led to our not noticing that there were social, political, and a number of other realities. Let us speak frankly: If we now had a union state operating on the principles of renewal, on the principles of the federation which we are talking about, probably many of these problems would not exist.

"I should inform our comrades and viewers that both the Supreme Soviet and the Federation Council are dealing with the problems connected with solving this matter, and in the next day or two the government commission, together with the commission of the USSR Supreme Soviet deputies, will go to this region to start, or try to start, a political process, and, as it was said at the Federation Council, if the efforts of this commission do not bring any positive solutions, then, evidently, the Federation Council and the Supreme Soviet will consider other measures which should normalize the situation. I want to say that we would hope very much for prudence from both the Georgian and Ossetian people and that it will be possible to solve this problem by political methods because any other solution, some forcible solution, of the issue can lead to even more bloodshed. We would not want this bloodshed, and, therefore, we are for a political dialogue. I hope that I am heard now by the leadership of the Georgian Supreme Soviet."

At 0705 GMT, the Moscow announcer reads several questions on holding the union referendum in the Baltic republics, to which Yanayev replies: "I think that these questions are really connected with the particular political situation that has arisen in the Baltic republics. I should say that the results of the polls which were held by the supreme soviets of the baltic republics were declared by presidential decree to be juridically invalid. We consider that, as long as the Constitution remains in force and no single Baltic republic has formally seceded from the Soviet Union, they should observe those laws operating on the territory of the Soviet Union. That is why we consider that, in all the Baltic republics, whether the supreme soviets like it or not, the referendums should take place and the population should express its opinion as to the future state structure. We know that now the supreme soviets of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia are obstructing the holding of the all-union referendum. That is why, to ensure the observation of the right of each person freely to express his opinion, a decision has been made which gives town, rayon, and rural soviets, and also soviets of labor collectives, the right, on their own initiative, to organize this referendum if any official authorities hinder the holding of this referendum. I think that that part of the population not able to speak the local language—the Russian-speaking population living in these republics, and those serving in the Soviet Army and internal troops and state security committees and members of their families—just like all the other citizens in these republics should have the right freely to express their opinion."

Galazov then says that everyone should give every assistance to holding the referendum. He agrees with Yanayev that the South Ossentian conflict is political in nature and stresses that its inhabitants do not wish to leave the USSR and should be given the chance to say so, adding: "I am convinced that there is no point in holding any other referenda at the same time. For instance, at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic, an overwhelming majority of deputies decided that a Russian referendum, on whether to have a Russian president or not, should not be held on 17 March. This does not mean that we have abandoned the Russian referendum. We believe that working people in our republic could answer this question in a calm atmosphere at any other time. Nobody is forcing us. The following Sunday or, better still, after the Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies, we could hold this referendum."

Galazov then reiterates that the original draft of the union treaty was extensively discussed in North Ossetia; that the republic's supreme soviet discussed it; and that the first draft was approved in principle, though some criticisms were voiced. He reports that the revised draft published today will be studied next week by soviets throughout the republic and that the republic's supreme soviet will meet on 20 March to discuss the draft and any comments received from lower levels. Criticisms and proposals will be forwarded to the Federation Council and the USSR Supreme Soviet, Galazov says, adding that, when he addressed the Federation Council, he stressed the need for the treaty to be concluded soon. He concludes by saying endless debate will not help because the country is in a very grave situation.

At 0710 GMT, the Moscow announcer asks: "I have several questions here. Ivan Pavlovich Pavlov—he does not say where he comes from—asks why we place so much reliance on the union treaty. Are horizontal links between independent states worse? A question for you, Gennadiy Ivanovich."

Yanayev replies: "I think that this is a very important and very interesting question, and I am pleased to answer it. The point is we are not opposed to horizontal links. We are in favor of developing horizontal links at all levels. At the same time, let us consider things this way: Why is the country in such a state that we are virtually talking about a total crisis? It is because we have not yet resolved the main question: What sort of state should we have? If one now considers what will happen if we do not conclude the union treaty, there will be further political degradation. Interethnic conflicts will be exacerbated. There will be a crisis of executive power. The war of sovereignties will continue. In the end, we will disintegrate into 15 separate principalities with their own armies, customs services, nuclear weapons. In the final analysis, our responsiblity for the fate of the country is dictated not only by our national interests but also by the interests of the international community, for the international community does not want to deal with appanage principalities. In that case, there would be a nuclear bacchanalia. And under conditions when there is such interethnic confrontation, where is the guarantee that these weapons will not be fired, as in the Chekhov play? That is why, aware of our responsibility to the world community, we should do everything to ensure that we seriously consider this treaty and that we sign it precisely as a union treaty. Because the people must know that they live in a single state, with a single predictable policy and on completely new principles of interrelations between the center and the subjects of the federation, changed in the direction of expanding the rights of the subjects of the federation on the basis of those declarations of sovereignty they have adopted."

The presenter then says: "Thank you. Nikolay Pavlovich Volkov, from Moscow, asks several questions, including the following—If you permit me, I will restate it like this: Which of the leaders of Russia signed the draft union treaty? Yeltsin? Or Khasbulatov? The question is addresed to you."

Yanayev replies: "Evidently, in anticipation of this question, I have brought along the draft which contains all the signatures. Here, the draft was signed on behalf of the Russian Federation by Comrades Khasbulatov—just a moment, I apologize to the viewers, although the question was anticipated I was not quite ready for it—the Russian Federation is here on the first page—by Comrade Khasbulatov, Comrade Isakov, Comrade Abdulatipov, two leaders of the chambers, and the first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. But, at the same time, I would like to observe—and Comrade Galazov will agree with me—that Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin was present during the sitting of the Federation Council, and he, on behalf of the Supreme Soviet and on his own behalf, as chairman of the Supreme Soviet, accepted as a basis this draft as discussed."

At 0715 GMT, Galazov comments, saying "vertical ties" are needed as well as "horizontal" ones. He warns that if the ties are all "horizontal," the union will cease to be a federation. He says that it will be a confederation and that citizens who now consider themselves citizens of the Soviet Union will suffer. He concludes by reiterating that both "horizontal" and "vertical" ties must be strengthened; if vertical ties are not strengthened, defense will be undermined.

Speaking as a theater director, Tsikhiyev asks what has happened to the "horizontal" and "vertical" ties that there used to be with Moscow, with the Ukraine, Belorussia, Russia, and other republics. He recalls that the first professional play to be staged in Ossetia, in 1935, was Ukrainian not Ossetian. The practice of companies going on tour in other parts of the union has fallen into abeyance, he adds.

Galazov then considers that all the republics will, sooner or later, want to join the union. He points out that Soviet history contained many good things, as well as bad, and it would be unforgivable to destroy it all.

At 0720 GMT, the Moscow announcer says: "Thank you. I have several questions and ideas expressed by viewers. (Nerzhinov), from Moscow, says: Your answers are the same empty phrases which we have heard for 73 years. Speak briefly and to the point, not in empty phrases." The announcer adds: "I do not think references to unity and responsibility toward coming generations and toward ourselves are empty phrases. They are quite serious points."

Yanayev replies: "In that case, maybe I could be allowed to use one phrase, not an empty one?"

The announcer replies: "Please do."

Yanayev then continues: "There is this question: Why is Yanayev against the unity of the RSFSR and against the statehood of the RSFSR? There is a misrepresentation in this question, to put it simply. Yanayev has never opposed Russia's sovereignty, Russia's statehood. He has never adocated the division of Russia. Yanayev has always advocated a single, sovereign, and strong Russia and will continue to do so."

The announcer then says: "Thank you, Gennadiy Ivanovich. Here's another question about Russia, although it's got more to do with the referendum. It's from Konstantin Viktorovich (Vymyslov), who lives at Lyubertsy: I would be glad to vote yes if the RSFSR's sovereignty were guaranteed, but I am afraid that if the referendum results in a majority in favor, all-union plundering of Russia's riches will begin again."

Yanayev replies: "You know, I think that we actually see the new union, the new federation, as a federation based on fundamentally different criteria, on different principles. Now that we are clearly differentiating between the powers of the center, the powers of the union republics, and joint union-republican, so to speak, powers, I believe that there need be no apprehension that Russia's riches will be pilfered by anybody. We must live in a single economic space, so to speak. We must live in a single state. Naturally, a certain proportion of the wealth used to conduct foreign trade and so on will, obviously, derive from contributions made by each specific republic or component of the federation. These funds will clearly be used to tackle social and economic problems. But there can be no question whatsoever of any plundering, let alone of Russia. That is absolutely out of the question."

The announcer then reports that there have been many reactions to the video on South Ossetian unrest, but stresses that that is another subject and that both Georgian and Ossetian leaders have appeared on the "Community Channel" program on this subject. The next question is for Galazov and Tsikhiyev, asking whether the union referendum isn't a propaganda trick.

Galazov says that there is too much confrontation in the country and that it is in the interests of the people for all parties and movements to cooperate. The CPSU is still the major political force, he says.

Tsikhiyev comments on holding the referendum in the RSFSR, saying he will vote "yes".

The announcer then reads a question about official obstruction of the referendum in Moldova. Galazov says that the center should ensure that everyone can exercise the right to express his opinion. He asks: If the authorities are really concerned for the people, what have they got to fear? Tsikhiyev says this obstruction denies human rights.

At 0725 GMT, Yanayev interrupts to say: "I would like to continue the theme my colleagues have begun, about democracy and about the decisions taken in Moldavia. Nikolay Ivanovich Kozlov, from the town of Beltsy, asks the following question: What do you think of the appeal by the Moldova Popular Front for nonparticipation in the union referendum and their threats to picket the polling stations and also the statement by the president of Moldova about nonparticipation in the union referendum? I would like to ask: Those republics speaking about wanting to secede from the USSR—in this case, this does not refer to Moldavia—why do they fear a referendum? Why do democrats want to use pickets or any other strong-arm methods to wreck this referendum? It seems to me that the conclusion is clear: They are not confident that the people will support those decisions of the supreme soviets that were very often taken contrary to the existing constitution that we are all guided by. I have one curious question, signed: a democrat. It says: I will vote for the new federation only on the condition that there are no Communists in it. I think that the way the question is put says all we need to know about this so-called democrat. One wonders why the 16 or 18 million Communists should be removed, these same Communists who have begun perestroyka, are continuing to move perestroyka forward, and who bear responsibility for the results of this perestroyka. I think that, if we wish to construct a democratic and humane society, we should respect various points of views, a pluralist society, but a society based on the law."

The announcer then reads a question asking why the RSFSR government is not represented in the program. Yanayev says it will be in future programs.

The announcer then reads out a viewer's suggestion that, in advance of the referendum, the USSR president and the republican heads should hold a public round-table discussion of programs for a renewed union.

Yanayev replies: "I think that, as far as concerns President Gorbachev, he has very clearly set out his position with regard to the union referendum and the union treaty. I think the leaders of the other republics, too, have already spoken a great deal on this subject. But, in itself, I think that the idea is viable. It is a different matter, and it would take many hours of airtime to set out these positions, and these are very specific discussions. Perhaps one could find some other form of setting out viewpoints which would be more in accord with our genre. But, it is very clear that before the referendum we should set out these points of view."

The announcer chooses one last question: "Do you think that the publication of the draft union treaty, the treaty on the union of sovereign republics, will remove many of the questions that we have here? A question for you, Gennadiy Ivanovich."

Yanayev replies: "I think that the publication, agreed on at the Federation Council—and implemented most precisely, the plan was to publish this draft precisely on 9 March—making it possible for the citizens of our country to understand what sort of state we wish to build, on what principles, using what approaches, in what way we will ensure the specific sovereignty of the republics which have adopted declarations of sovereignty. It seems to me that these are very good guidelines. Naturally, it still needs further work with the population to explain the basic principles since the document is of a political and legal nature. But, nonetheless, this is a basis, and I would like to make use of the opportunity to call on all USSR citizens to participate actively in the referendum and, in this way, to express their attitude to the existence of a single, strong, predictable Soviet Union, a flourishing Soviet Union able to cope successfully with the problems we are still faced with today, unfortunately."

At 0730 GMT, the live relay ends.

'Top Priority' on Union Treaty

LD0903035891 Moscow World Service in English 2300 GMT 8 Mar 91

["Top Priority" program hosted by Irina Tkachenko, with Viktor Kremenyuk, deputy director of the USSR Academy of Sciences United States of America and Canada Institute, and Andrey Kortunov, department head at the same institute]

[Excerpts] [Tkachenko] Welcome to "Top Priority." I am Irina Tkachenko, and together with Viktor Kremenyuk, deputy director of the institute for U.S. and Canadian studies, and Andrey Kortunov, head of a department from the same institute, we look at the treaty of the Union that has at long last been approved in principle by the Council of the Federation, that unites leaders of all Soviet republics. The new treaty of the Union is designed to shape the contours of a new Union, or a renewed federation, or confederation. Most of the disagreements have been smoothed out. Is that to say that we are seeing at long last the real end of virtual disintegration of the Soviet Union? Andrey?

[Kortunov] Well, first of all I think that it would be at least premature to be too optimistic about the Union treaty, because first of all not all the republics approved even this draft adopted by the Council of the Federation. Second, the draft itself till now is very vague, and it is subject to very different interpretations. Third, I think that the referendums that we are going to have in a week's time will also mean an important change, because the public can express its own viewpoint on the Union, which will not necessarily coincide with the viewpoint of the Council of Federation.

[Tkachenko] We will come to the referendum, of the national plebiscite, in a few moments. Viktor, in the meanwhile, can you support the view that says the new document will in fact put an end to the (? rule of law)?

[Kremenyuk] Oh, well, I could not say, give, any definite answer to this question, since on the one hand I understand that the fact that finally we have an adopted, or an agreed upon, draft of the treaty is already something, something important for the political life of this country. But on the other hand, first of all we have to wait and to see what will be the returns of the referendum in a week's time on the 17th, and second what will be the reaction in the republican legislatures. I think that the opinion of the heads of those legislatures, who are the members of the Council of the Federation, does not reflect necessarily the real situation in the republics.

[Tkachenko] So presumably their opinion might be challenged in each particular republic by the lower level bodies of power?

[Kremenyuk] Oh, yes, of course, of course.

[Kortunov] Well, I wouldn't agree that we have a state of chaos or anarchy right now. But we are somewhere, sometimes on the verge of that situation, because each of the republics has a very significant complaint to the Union, and I am not sure that the draft of the treaty completely guarantees that there will be no, no further complaints in the future.

[Tkachenko] The referendums, the all-Union referendums, that it's supposed to define the future of the Soviet Union as it exists now—how does that tie in with the new treaty of the Union? Is there any point at all in holding a referendum, in your viewpoint, at this time, when this document is supposed to lay down the basic principles of the new confederation, or the new federation, the new arrangement? Andrey?

[Kortunov] Well, you know, I have a feeling that this referendum is very important for the president himself, because he definitely understands that his popularity is going down, that his legitimacy is questioned by many people in the republics, and that the leaders at the republican level are also questioning some of his authority. So I think that Gorbachev will try to use this referendum as a tool to get a kind of a (?public) mandate to go on with his own political and economic programs. And I think that the problem with this referendum is that the question about the Union, and the answer to this question, can be interpreted in very different ways. Because if you ask a person in the streets are you for the Union or against the Union, I think the most natural answer will be OK, I am for the Union, but it doesn't mean necessarily that a person who answers positively is also positively oriented towards quote unquote socialist choice—and on the other hand the leaders of the republics also want to use this referendum to [word indistinct] their own positions. And specifically, Yeltsin is going to put on the vote the issue of his own presidency, and what we can have as the result of this referendum is his possible mandate against Gorbachev's possible mandate. Therefore we can expect a new round of struggle between the republics and the center in late March after the referendum. [passage omitted]

[Tkachenko] Even though with the Baltic republics opting out of this referendum—and some sovereign republics, Georgia and Armenia and Moldova, are of course rejecting the very idea of holding an all-Union referendum on their territory, and replacing it with their own opinion polls, or at least postponing, as Armenia and Georgia have done, their own polls on the future of the republic—Even with these republics out, the remainder still control the majority of the votes, because the Russian Federation, the Ukraine, Belorussia, or central Asian republics, they have the majority of the population. Do you think the central government, do you think the Soviet president, might use it as a mandate for strengthening a hold on power?

[Kortunov] Oh, I think it would be feasible to expect that the president will try to use the results of the referendum as a kind of mandate to strengthen his position against the rebel republics of the Baltics and of Transcaucasia. But on the other hand I could hardly imagine how he can do it in practical terms, because [words indistinct] prospect of the presidential rule in the Baltics, of course it will be extreely difficult to introduce such a presidential rule against the will of the people of these republics. Moreover, one should note that these republics have already had their own referenda on their independence, and paradoxically even a large part of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia and Latvia voted for independence. I think it's a new and a very important sign in the political development of this country, because it shows that while the crisis, economic and political crisis, are deepening in this country, and people are losing confidence in the abilities of the central government to protect them, even the Russian-speaking population, which sometimes is not treated fairly by the local authorities of the Baltic republics, even the Russian-speaking population turns to the idea of independence. Therefore the center will have major problems if it tries to use this Russian-speaking population as its social and political base in these republics.

[Tkachenko] The population of this country [words indistinct] central government—does that mean that people still have trust in the republican leaders? Boris Yeltsin, for one, is losing popularity. There are problems in the Baltic republics, there are problems in Georgia, in the Ukraine, and there are problems with republican leaderships elsewhere. Do you think that legitimately elected heads of these governments still control the moods in their own republics, to the extent that could allow them to enact the reforms, the economic, the political reforms, that the central government has failed to enact so far?

[Kortunov] Well, you know, first of all I think that there is a kind of natural decline in popularity of the leaders who are coming to power. Becaue it's much easier to enjoy large popularity when you are in opposition than when you have some responsibility. But the problem of the central power, from my point of view, is that by trying to keep as much authority as it can for itself, it doesn't allow the republican leaders to get at least a share of responsibility—and therefore, though formally in power, the leaders of the republics can still pretend they are acting from the opposition, and therefore and they can, you know, avoid any responsibility for what is going on in their (?economics) themselves. For example, take the case of Yeltsin. Though he was elected more than half a year ago, though theoretically he should be at least partially responsible for the radical deterioration of living standards in Russia, he still manages to make the point that it is only Gorbachev who is to blame for that, that Yeltsin is unable to do anything because his hands are tied up because he is strangled by the central bureaucracy. And I think' it's highly counterproductive for [words indistinct] and for the central authorities to try to keep power just for itself, because if all popularity is going down, and the popularity of the republican leaders is still higher than the popularity of the [words indistinct]. [passage omitted]

[Tkachenko] So in these conditions, where is the future of the country, the future of the people being decided? Is it decided at the Moscow level, the presidential level—or perhaps is it decided at the republican level? Viktor?

[Kremenyuk] It's hard to say, because it will depend, I think, greatly upon the type of the issue that will be solved, or will have to be solved, and of the type of the solutions proposed. And I don't agree with Andrey to a significant extent, you know, in his analysis, because what I think the gist of the matter is [is] the approach to the allocation of resources. And the central government, of course, is overburdened with the necessity to allocate resources for the defense expense, for keeping up a huge bureaucracy, and many other not productive, so to say, expense—which, of course, which can be only, only extracted from the resources which can be spent on more or less productive purposes, while the republican governments are not overburdened with such issues, and they are much more flexible, and that's why they are more inclined to some radical economic solutions, irrespective of whether they are professional or not professionals.

But they have enough of common sense, understanding, that the amount of the resources they possess that can be spent for radical economic change, radical economic reform, for the introduction of some market base. And they are capable to do that while the central government is incapable—it has really to think primarily on spending that money that I mentioned, you know, and spending their resources, the majority, the bulk of their resources, on defense, on military establishment, on the security forces, on the interior forces, on all other branches of the government bureaucracy—and that becomes a real stumbling block. And I think that these are the matters which are at the heart of the, of the conflict, with the center and the republics. And in these conditions of course the people, the ordinary people, would tend always to support their republican governments. So I think that irrespective of the results of this referendum, still the trend among the people in the streets will be to support those who are closer to them in their outlook. in their approach to the economic matters, and in their readiness to do something, you know, to improve the living standards of the common people.

[Tkachenko] Is it then fair to say that we are moving forward at all in seeing the new treaty of the Union adopted, the referendum held, and the national republican opinion polls spreading all across the country? Or is it just a waste of time and whereas [as heard] some more practical and down to earth economic matters should be tackled more energetically?

[Kremenyuk] No, no, no, no. In our case it's a very important thing—I mean the referendum, I mean all the other public opinion polls—because of course we understand that we are on the [word indistinct]—we are entering the stage when some rather severe and drastic measures had to be undertaken to improve the general economic situation. And it would be only very useful for the political leaders to know what is the spectrum of the public opinion right now. But at the same time, of course, maybe the public, the polls, at the same time prompt what to do, what not to do, since there is always a kind of a choice in decision making. Until recently, at least the new Soviet Government was rather tough and rather rigid in its solutions. Somehow the results of this referendum may also play a role of stabilizing, or somehow constraining, that rigidity.

[Tkachenko] Andrey, would you say that the adoption of the new treaty of the Union, and possibly the referendum of 17 March, will perhaps bring the specter [as heard] of national conciliation a little bit closer?

[Kortunov] Well, let's hope that it will, though we should not be too optimistic about that.

[Tkachenko] Thank you very much, and let me end this edition of "Top Priority." I was speaking to Viktor Kremenyuk and Andrey Kortunov of the institute for U.S. and Canadian studies here in Moscow. Meanwhile, if you could join us next week at the same time. Goodbye.

Alksnis Stresses Support for Gorbachev

OW0903102391 Tokyo NHK General Television Network in Japanese 1433 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Interview with Viktor Alksnis, colonel in the Soviet Air Force and member of the Soviet conservative group "Soyuz," by NHK commentator Takeshi Iida at a Moscow hotel; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Iida] Is it true that you are trying to force President Gorbachev to resign?

[Alksnis] What an absurd idea. Soyuz, the group to which I belong, has never demanded President Gorbachev's resignation. It may sound surprising, but I am a supporter of President Gorbachev. Thanks to glasnost, one of Gorbachev's policies, I can be here today to talk about his policies. The problem Gorbachev faces is rooted in the fact that when he began advocating perestroyka, he had programs for destroying old structures, but none for creating new ones. It is precisely programs for creating new structures that are most needed now.

[Iida] I understand that you espouse a theory that the Soviet Union should learn from Japan's experience. Is that correct?

[Alksnis] In promoting economic reforms, I believe that Japanese examples in this regard will be very helpful. For us to shift to a market-oriented economy, it is absolutely necessary to have political stability. Of course, no direct comparison is possible. I believe that it will be a important, however, to remember that following Japan's defeat in the Second World War, the United States brought political stability to Japan with its strong power, and then restored a market-oriented economy.

[Iida] You are staying at the hotel without any guards; don't you sense any danger?

[Alksnis] No, I have not sensed any dangers. Something happened to me yesterday, however. I appeared on a state-run television program called "Good Evening, Moscow." When I left the studio after the program, I saw five ladies standing in the hallway. They were all Yeltsin supporters, and I was criticized in most harsh terms. I was rather surprised to notice that the sense of political confrontation has affected even common women.

[Iida] Aren't you considering having some guards attached to you, just as Mr. Yeltsin has?

[Alksnis] No, not at all.

Miners' Union Sued Over 1-2 March Strike

LD0903213191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1630 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] The administration of the Karagandaugol association has applied to the oblast court requesting to declare the 1-2 March strike by the miners illegal and sueing them for the nine million rubles the enterprise lost following the strike. The defendant, as the suit notes, is the territorial council of the trade union of coal industry workers and the oblast workers committee, which organized the strike and an unsanctioned rally. In the opinion of the lawyers, the accusations brought against them are rather serious. After all, the organizers of the strike had not notified the local organs of power about it, as required by the law, and essentially ignored the decision of the city soviet banning them from holding the rally in the first place.

Economic

'No Unity' Among Vorkuta Mine Workers on Strike

LD0903211591 Moscow TASS in English 2014 GMT 9 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Makarov]

[Text] Vorkuta March 9 TASS—There is no unity now among Vorkuta mineworkers on whether or not they should continue the strike, started on March 7 at a number of mines in the Pechora coalfield.

Most mineworkers support the economic demands submitted to the Federal government. If they are fulfilled, this will ensure for them satisfactory living conditions in the polar region. But many workers believe that today, in an extremely difficult economic situation, they should press for meeting their demands without resorting to strikes, by means of talks with the Soviet Cabinet of Ministers. This is why mineworkers from the Pechora coalfield insist almost unanimously on immediate talks between their representatives and Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov. Delegations have already been formed in Vorkuta and Inta for this purpose.

The Vorkuta strike coordinating council met twice on Saturday. It is made up of representatives of ten out of

13 Vorkuta mines, other enterprises of the coal industry, trade unions and the city strike workers' committee.

V. Molchanov, chairman of the regional committee of the coamliners' union, incorporated in the coordinating council, told TASS that nine out of its 16 members voted for the continuation of the strike until the beginning of talks between mineworkers and Pavlov.

Two out of 13 Vorkuta mines did not work on Saturday. Repair and maintenance operation were carried out in full volume at four mines. The remaining mines were producing coal as usual. According to specialists, today's coal output will be one trainload of coal less than was planned. This is equal to three thousand tonnes.

All coal mines were working in Inta on Saturday. The collectives of two mines that were on strike there decided to press for the fulfilment of their demands without stopping production. The Intaugol concern produced 40 carloads of coal over and above the planned target on Saturday, which is equal to 4,000 tonnes.

Council Favors Continued Strike

[illegible]D1003064491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0600 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] A coordinating council of the miners' strike in the Arctic town of Vorkuta has spoken in favor of continuing the strike until the start of negotiations with Valentin Pavlov, USSR prime minister. Many miners support the economic demands put forward to the Union Government—in particular the demand to increase the wage. May I remind you that the strike at a number of Pechora coal basins started on 7 March.

Request Meeting With Pavlov

LD1003180991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1635 GMT 10 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Viktor Makarov]

[Text] Vorkuta (Komi SSR [Soviet Socialist Republic]), 10 Mar (TASS)—The situation in the important coal-producing region of the Soviet Union in the Pechora coal basin has become further complicated. Last night, six out of the 13 Vorkuta mines were on strike. For the first time, the miners of Vorgashorskaya, the largest mine, have stopped work.

The miners are stating economic demands to the government: to double their salary and to increase tax and pension allowances.

The coordination strike committee of Vorkuta has decided today that the delegation of miners representatives from this Arctic town should urgently fly to Moscow for negotiations with Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov. The delegation wishes to get an appointment with the head of the country's Cabinet of Ministers and to hand over the package of the Arctic miners' demands. Some members of the coordination committee and the working collectives of the Vorkuta coal industry enterprises consider it necessary to continue the strike until talks begin with the country's prime minister, who has insisted that negotiations will be possible only when the mines are working.

All the mines of the Intaugol concern were working today at the usual rate.

Legislators Vote to Investigate Fund

LD0903130591 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1158 GMT 9 Mar 91

[From the "Television News Service" program]

[Text] The publication in Russian newspapers of documents in which President Gorbachev was mentioned has been submitted to the USSR Procuracy for examination. In the documents the president's support was expressed for the activity of the To the Eternal Memory of Soldiers' Fund, one of those figuring in the sensation-causing affair of 40 billion [rubles]

At the Supreme Soviet session statements were heard to the effect that the document is false, and the legislators decided by a majority to votes to involve the law-enforcement bodies in this matter.

Cabinet To Lift Restrictions on Bank Repayment

LD0803144391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1400 GMT 8 mar 91

[Text] Speaking at the all-Union conference of leaseholders, USSR Deputy Minister Vladimir Shcherbakov said that the USSR Cabinet of Ministers has decided to lift the 500-rouble-a-month restriction on repaying savings from the deposits of private individuals at the USSR savings bank. This was introduced on 22 January of this year, if you recall.

According to Shcherbakov, in the near future the country's Gosbank [State Bank] will send telegrams to the branches of the savings bank about the lifting of the restriction. This was reported by the POSTFAKTUM agency.

'Most' Short-Term Debts Reported Paid Off

AU0803201291 Paris AFP in English 1952 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Paris, March 8 (AFP) — The Soviet Union has paid off most of its short-term debts, Thomas Alibegov, first vice-president of the Soviet Foreign Trade Bank, said here on Friday [8 March].

He added that while the Soviet financial situation remains difficult, Moscow hopes to restore Western confidence within six months.

He said that "The weight of the short-term debt has now largely vanished", since it amounted to 18 billion dollars at the start of 1990 and it now only two billion dollars.

The total Soviet foreign debt is now about 60 billion dollars, he added.

"There is no plan for restructuring the Soviet debt", he added. "That is neither necessary nor desirable at present".

Unpaid commercial invoices amount to a little less than five billion dollars, he said, but measures will be taken to pay them off "and to avoid having this problem arise again".

Government Officials Cited on State Debt Problem

PM1103100391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
8 Mar 91 Union Edition p 3

[I. Demchenko article: "Our Debt to Other Countries"]

[Text] At the USSR Foreign Ministry press center 6 March there was official meeting between Foreign Ministry staffers and representatives of sociopolitical organizations on the theme "The USSR's Inclusion in World Economic Structures and the Role of International Financial and Economic Organizations in This Question." During the meeting there was a question about the size of the Soviet foreign debt and progress in repaying it.

Answering the question, USSR Deputy Foreign Minister E. Obminskiy said that our country's foreign currency and financial position has deteriorated recently and the foreign debt is rising rapidly. In total the USSR state debt now stands at $60 billion (over 40 billion foreign currency rubles; but the limit of the debt set for this year by the USSR Supreme Soviet is 42 billion foreign currency rubles—I.D. note). This high level of debt is connected with the decision on the compulsory sale to the state of 40 percent of the foreign currency earned by enterprises. "This is a problem we have, not a principle of centralizing resources," E. Obminskiy stressed.

As for payments of interstate credits, they are proceeding smoothly. In the deputy minister's words, there hasn't been a single criticism of us here yet. Large debts have accumulated under agreements between foreign firms and Soviet enterprises. E. Obminskiy even complained about the stereotyped thinking of foreign partners who automatically expect a state guarantee when they sign contracts with our organizations.

In a conversation between your IZVESTIYA correspondent and I. Ivanov, deputy chairman of the State Foreign Economic Commission, which took place the day before, statistics were cited which make these figures specific. This year the process of servicing the state debt made it necessary to pay out 12.5 billion foreign currency rubles, an unprecedented sum for our country. Some 3.5 billion of that was rescheduled. Thus 9 billion foreign currency rubles must be repaid, which is also a very large amount. Next year it will be necessary to pay over 6.5 billion foreign currency rubles, excluding the credits which may yet be given. As for the debt of our organizations, this is often do with centralized imports of scarce commodities: soap, cigarettes, potatoes, sugar, powdered milk, chemicals, and components. These imports are not paid for with hard currency; they are taken on credit, and now our foreign trade organizations have run up unpaid accounts of approximately 3 billion rubles. Thus sometimes it is not a foreign firm but a Soviet foreign trade association which has been commissioned to conclude a contract which asks the USSR Bank for Foreign Economic Activity to guarantee the payment of accounts. This is a completely new situation.

As E. Obminskiy rightly noted, the country's financial rating depends on its solvency. From being a good risk as a borrower to whom everyone is ready to give credits we are beginning to turn into a dubious payer. The reasons for this situation include not only the short-sightedness of our previous credit policy (meaning the resources which we lent to developing countries and the less than obvious possibility of getting them back) but also the crisis in the Persian Gulf. "We have not received from Iraq what we should have," E. Obminskiy said.

Once again let me cite the conversation with I. Ivanov. In his words, our losses from the Near East crisis result from Iraq's ceasing to repay Soviet credits and from the cessation of supplies of oil from Iraq and a number of other Arab countries as a gesture of sympathy with it, oil which we re-exported to the world market. These losses are not compensated by the rise in oil prices because we have lost a considerable amount of oil and our own extraction is declining...

I would add that when talking about the EEC Council of Ministers conference on 4 March, E. Obminskiy recalled that recently the Common Market adopted—and I quote—"a quite hasty decision to freeze aid which had been promised us. Primarily technical and credit aid. No particular barriers were placed in the way of humanitarian aid." He went on to say that the freezing of technical aid—aid which was meant to be channeled into developing market structures—as a "'punishment' for certain events in the Soviet Union" strikes him as illogical. It was at that conference on 4 March that a decision was adopted to continue talks on giving our country aid to develop market infrastructures. I add that this seems to be the first official recognition that there has been a certain cooling toward our country in connection with "certain" events taking place in our country.

All-Union Leaseholders Conference Analyzed

PM1103102791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
7 Mar 91 Union Edition p 3

[Report by M. Krushinskiy: "Leasing as a Means of Survival"]

[Text] The All-Union Conference of Leaseholders, Entrepreneurs, and Small Business People has ended in Moscow. There was little sign of the atmosphere of euphoric expectation dominating the leaseholders' union congress a year ago. Now, on the contrary, the prevailing mood was one of weariness and disappointment. Practically every speech contained criticism of the country's leadership and of ministries or departments, which are trying to play "economic games" according to bureaucratic rules or without rules at all.

Some people are being prevented from breaking out of the departmental structure and becoming a leaseholder, indeed there are even attempts to subject "obstinate types" to criminal prosecution. Some are stymied for want of raw materials and parts. Some have been plagued by endless checks. And, of course, individuals who decided on economic independence are not the only victims; there are also entire labor collectives, in some cases big ones. Examples were cited at the conference of giant industrial operations with company capital of over 100 million rubles [R] and thousands of workers switching to the lease system.

Well, although in recent years each "present moment" has been regarded here as either crucial or decisive, today's could be called "crucially crucial." What is waiting "around the corner" for all of us, in particular those people who put their faith in perestroyka, in the possibility of feeding themselves, their families, and the country by means of free labor? Will we give them free rein and let them take others with them or will we leave them in suspense?

Unfortunately, USSR Deputy Prime Minister V.I. Shcherbakov was unable to dispel the anxiety of many people at the conference. He was in the presidium on both days, absorbing the edgy atmosphere in the hall, and when he had to reply to awkward questions and rather caustic remarks he in turn displayed edginess. It was hardly necessary, for example, to say in reply to a Kuban leaseholder's speech that they had once known only too well about how collectivization is carried out and now they had become privatization experts. Perhaps it was also unnecessary to denounce the audience as unreliable entrepreneurs, since, he said, Western businessmen risk personal capital, whereas in our case—now, raise your hands, those of you who have invested your own money—and so on.

It seems to me that our intellectual (so many doctors of sciences!) but callow government has no right as yet to talk to the practitioners of economic reform in a didactic tone. After all, it is the state, rather than they, that it is to blame for the lack of opportunity to personally take a commercial risk, because for many years it has monopolized the labor and capital markets. And, anyway, this is not the best time for an exchange of polemical barbs. If the new cabinet is a self-proclaimed champion of the market, of free enterprise, and of a diversity of forms of ownership (and V.I. Shcherbakov declared himself a supporter of the aforementioned), then there is more to gain from collecting constructive ideas rather than offensive criticism, and there was enough of the former at the confernece.

What kind of ideas? Here is just a tiny sample: Immediate legislation is needed to change the situation whereby state property cannot be bought without the consent of the management; enterprises in the nonstate sector must be spared unnecessary statistical returns; a program should be devised to support owner and tenant farms, and a union peasant bank must be set up; a higher tax rate should be established for monopoly enterprises; a procedure should be established whereby an enterprise wishing to be a leaseholder can conclude a contract not with a department, but directly with the state property administration; the range of enterprises entitled to switch to leaseholding should be significantly widened...

A great deal was said about leasing matters—someone who is unacquainted with our realities would probably have concluded that there was too much. It is time, he would say, to fight not for leasing, but for complete buyouts of production capital. I would point out, however, that far from everyone has the means for a complete buyout. And not everyone would be granted credit to do so. The lease system aids the painless and gradually movement of the "lever" from one form of ownership to another. Many "informal" economic setups would have gone under but for the lease system. Our descendants, living in civilized market conditions, will probably have a kind word for it, as a rescue mission.

More on Meeting Between Cabinet, TU Leaders

PM0803162391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 7 Mar 91 Union Edition p 2

[Report by V. Romanyuk: "Prices and Power; USSR Cabinet of Ministers Meeting With General Confederation of Trade Unions Leadership"]

[Text] On 5 March the new Cabinet of Ministers had its first meeting with trade union leaders in the Kremlin. It discussed approaches to the upcoming reform of pricing and social protection.

The tone of the discussion was set by the speeches by V.I. Shcherbakov, deputy prime minister, and V.P. Shcherbakov, chairman of the USSR General Confederation of Trade Unions. In the course of a series of debates the representatives of the government and trade unions essentially clarified their positions and found mutual understanding on matters related to prices. The only differences that remain are on a few food products which the trade union's wanted to be more tightly regulated.

Another dispute, a very acute one as it turned out, concerned the extent of compensation. Both the draft decree and the draft resolution state that compensation is not taxable. In other words, the action does not have any fiscal goals. Moreover, as regards the specific compensation sums set for the different groups of the population, the biggest supplements will go to young and large families and also to pensioners, in order to maintain at least their present living standard. Compensation for the active sector of the population is 60 rubles [R] (lower limit). A small sum, but, at the same time, restrictions on bonus payments and wage and salary increments have been lifted, which can also be seen as the first stage in a pay reform.

"Can," that is—from the government's position. The trade unions do not see it like that. This is where considerable differences of approach emerge: Coal miners, metallurgists, and chemical workers are asking for a 100-150 percent pay increase, while some collectives are demanding a pay increase of 600 percent! And they put it in a tough, ultimatumlike way: They talk, on the one hand, of warning strikes and, on the other hand, of lengthy strikes. There is no money in the republic to redistribute in favor of particular occupations, the government representative declared. You cannot revise the pension legislation that has only just been adopted! And there is nowhere else to look.

The next speaker, V.P. Shcherbakov, chairman of the General Confederation of Trade Unions, said: You cannot talk seriously about the social protection of working people until laws are adopted on requisite living standards, on the minimum level of pay that corresponds to it, and on indexing working people's incomes. The official minimum living wage is set at the laughable sum of R70, while, as calculations made in Moscow alone show: The minimum living wage for a Muscovite was R151 in 1989, R160 in the first half of 1990, and R203 at the beginning of 1991. Having seen that prices are increasing by 200-300 percent, working people are demanding a corresponding increase in pay. They have no faith in the R60 compensation.

Some debate participants were bewildered by the figure cited in the press for the proposed average increase in retail prices—60 percent. Prices of many goods will increase by 100-200 percent, so why does the average figure appear so modest? The art of statistics, no less.

Answering a statement by an opponent to the effect that large anounts of commodities have been built up in the country and are being withheld from sale, in expectation of new prices, [Cabinet of Ministers Chairman] V. Pavlov cited some new statistics: In January there was a 5-percent reduction in stocks of light industry goods (50 percent compared with 1 February 1990). Stocks of goods in the trade network are currently well below the norm. There is simply nothing to sell.

The final question concerns the timeframe of the price reform. Many were opposed to delaying the solution of the problem until after the referendum. Pavlov said that the main documents were ready: the presidental decree and Cabinet of Ministers resolution. Practically all the republics have backed the proposed program of measures. The ball is in the Russian Federation's court. The Russian Supreme Soviet and Council of Ministers accepted the proposed price reform, but B. Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, sent the prime minister his objections. So the union government is dragging its feet, fearing that price anomalies will make the economic situation even worse. The money to pay the compensation has even been distributed to the regions—payments are supposed to start before the prices actually increase. "We are not hurrying, because we want to avoid a reduction in production," the prime minister explained. "Otherwise we would just go into a tailspin."

An unpleasant prognosis. It seemed to me it would not serve as grounds for sluggishness, even indecision, on the part of the new Cabinet of Ministers, and appears to have inherited something of the work style of the old government.

Currency Speculation by Joint Venture Firm

91UF0527A Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 1 Mar 91 pp 2-3

[Article by Leonid Repin: "Games of Chance in Antwerp, or How To Lose Several Tens of Millions of Dollars in Public Money"]

[Text]

The Game's Participants Sit Down at the Table and the Cards Are Dealt

I heard it and I could not believe my eyes. I read it and I could not believe my ears.

Such an unusual reversal of the physiological functions of my body took place because I had to listen to my interlocutor, an official of the USSR Ministry of Finances who has expressed a wish to remain anonymous, a request I will honor, and at the same time study documents extracted from the bowels of one of the safes of the USSR Procuracy.

It turns out that, according to our remarkably senseless but touchingly philanthropic laws, one may lose a prodigious amount of foreign currency belonging to the state and then confess without losing a moment, "It was not on purpose!"—and the aforementioned reckless action will officially be considered negligence. True, criminal negligence. But even that is far from fatal.

So, once everyone is ready we deal out the cards. The subject is $42.5 million hopelessly lost in an illegal game by the leaders of the Belgian-Soviet joint-stock company Nafta-B, with its headquarters in the city of Antwerp, Belgium.

A short history. The company was created about a quarter of a century ago at a very difficult time when it took incredible labor to give birth to joint-stock companies. It was created to sell Soviet petroleum products (not just oil) to Belgium and the neighboring countries of Europe.

The company, even by Europe's fickle and captious standards, is considered a very large one and quite stable, and according to the table of ranks it consistently occupied second or third place among the largest commercial firms in Belgium.

Everything followed well-trodden paths: Via its own offshore reloading store, the purchased Soviet oil and other petroleum products were transported on barges, tankers, and tank cars throughout Belgium and other countries of Europe. Anyone who wanted could purchase it. Everything went well, and the firm's turnover grew and multiplied.

And suddenly... the USSR Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations received a secret message from Antwerp, from the very bowels of Nafta-B. My informant did not manage to find it for me even though it was not a coded message, but it amounted to the following: "We have lost it! We have lost so much that it takes our breath away! What do we do?!"

The ministry, instantly drenched in a cold sweat (not the entire ministry, of course, but those people informed of what had happened), immediately dispatched a special investigator, an experienced specialist on foreign-currency business, to Antwerp.

I managed to overtake him. Unfortunately, not in Antwerp but in our capital.

Bluff: The Cards Are Good but the Gamblers Pass

What could have happened there in Belgium? In that rich country that is always quiet and peaceful? Where no one steals not only because potential thieves are too lazy to steal but also because everyone has everything there? You must wait: The foundation has not been laid yet...

To understand what happened, it is necessary to understand the essence of several very simple financial operations.

Nafta-B is a particularly commercial organization. A vehicle transmission is the best visual image for it. Should someone care to buy our diesel fuel, Nafta-B was happy to provide its services. This is the way it is done: The purchaser pays the company, and in its turn the company transfers the money to the seller—in our case, Soyuznefteeksport [Union Oil Exports]. Is that not extremely easy?

But at this point a certain window forms that is extremely interesting to examine. This window is the brief interval between payments. In its journey from the purchaser to the seller the money falls into the window for a short time. The difference in the payment dates is often a month, sometimes more. During this time it is as though the money sits in a purse with a strong strap hanging around the neck of the company. For that short time it is as though the money belongs to no one.

Can the company not do something with the money to make it increase?.. It is very, very tempting... Incidentally, that short period of time is not at all so short. In fact it is a golden time! One only has to take the money and put it into a bank for an established period of time. If the sum is a significant one—and it always is with these sorts of transactions—an interest rate of 13 percent annually can be obtained—and that is a quite common percentage in Western banks—and a quite substantial amount of capital will accumulate. From nothing!

That is, if you do not take into consideration the fact that money makes money.

However, on this journey there is no getting past a bothersome obstacle: According to the currency legislation of Belgium, a company only has the right to keep Belgian francs in bank accounts. As a currency it is completely praiseworthy and convertible but, unfortunately, it is unstable and the exchange rate has an alarming tendency to fall. There are the U.S. dollar and the German mark—they are more reliable...

And that means? Of course! The obstacle may be circumvented with a sudden change of course if the Belgian francs are accurately converted into dollars or marks. And that is the whole affair.

P.P. Ratnikov, general director of Nafta-B, saw to the creation of a special commission to make term purchases of foreign currency. It included A.S. Popov, financial director of the company and Soviet citizen; Mr. Leyers [as transliterated], chief accountant and citizen of Belgium; and Mr. Van Eynde [as transliterated], head of the financial department and also a citizen of Belgium.

Whist: The Gamblers Begin To Play and Take Tricks

They are off! The volume of the company's financial operations increased rapidly—it literally doubled. Over nine months of 1982 alone, the joint-stock company Nafta-B concluded 46 transactions to purchase German marks and sell U.S. dollars. The operations were conducted in the most solid and reliable banks so that there would be no fear of bankruptcy, God forbid: Bank of America, Generale Banque, Credit Lyonnaise, Banque Bruxelles Lambert, Deutsche Bank, First Chicago Bank, and a number of other accumulators and multipliers of an international fortune.

All the members of the aforementioned commission are people with much experience in financial matters, and they live by their ability to count and calculate. For them, to make a mistake is worse than death. As a result, business went splendidly: They invested the money that was freed by the trade operations and, after the fixed term, took out the interest. The interest, it should be said, was substantial.

Comrade Popov, Mr. Leyers, and Mr. Van Eynde played at the decline in the rate of exchange of the German mark against the U.S. dollar, and at first it went well: They won. But at the moment that a transaction was completed, when that window in time had closed, the unexpected happened on 30 September 1982. The exchange rate of the mark rose. They had calculated—and they had made an error. Alas, you can never learn everything: At one moment war breaks out somewhere, at the next ministries of foreign affairs very inopportunely quarrel—anything can happen influencing the exchange rate of one currency against another.

All told, the losses of Nafta-B immediately amounted to a round sum of almost $26.5 million. But that is far from all. At the beginning of September it had already become clear to the luckless gamblers that the company would inevitably suffer great losses; in the second half of that same month, they nonetheless concluded 12 more transactions, the terms of which expired in October, that resulted in additional losses of approximately $7.5 million.

Now, dear reader, I will reveal to you what I can longer hide from you. The most striking thing is that all these monetary games were strictly prohibited by the charter of the joint-stock company Nafta-B and by Belgian legislation. As a result, they were illegal. And that was fraught with such consequences that it would have been preferable if a local earthquake had broken out in Belgium with its epicenter at the office of the company. An earthquake accompanied by a fire and an explosion.

The Gamblers Discard and Draw

I do not know which is the better way to view the further actions of the gamblers. On the one hand it is possible to believe that, losing their heads, they attempted disorderly flight in search of a way out. On the other hand, they might have acted quite coldbloodedly and continued to conclude transactions (transactions that were still illegal!) counting on a win in order to cover their losses.

Belgian law threatened them with the greatest misfortune, and as a result the sober-minded leaders of the company, apparently not suffering any remorse, decided to hide their prohibited oppositions and the losses connected with them from the Belgian financial organs. And what other choice did they have? They had already gone so far.

What should be done when one side of the scale is falling and the other side is rising? Correct. A weight must be put on the side that has risen so unpredictably. In our case that means to find money as quickly as possible and make up the catastrophic loss. In other words, fictitious profits, like a black veil, to cover the losses. And this was the decision made by the leaders of Nafta-B: God willing, it would work.

Thus, they had to get credit from some bank as quickly as possible. It should not be said that the task was especially difficult—credit is a common thing. What about the bank? It would get its interest. The difficulties might arise later when the time would come to return the money. But even that problem could be resolved: Very quietly, without attracting attention to themselves—in other words illegally—they only needed to take out another loan in order to pay back the first. As for how to pay back the new loan, they would worry about that later.

The lifesaving credit was obtained from the Banque de Paris in Switzerland. The banks are not publicizing the secret of the transactions, Nafta-B has its own reasons to keep quiet, and the terms under which the loan was granted have remained somewhere in a dark corner behind the scenes. No documents about it have been preserved.

The secret move came off brilliantly: No one knew anything. The money lost in the illegal games was covered as though nothing had ever happened. The most surprising thing is that the loan was returned to the bank on time. This is surprising because Nafta-B itself did not have a penny to its name! They knew their business!

By all means. One tenderhearted firm was located that offered money so that the joint-stock company could settle accounts with the bank. One must suppose that the firm paid off the debt of the joint-stock company for some reason other than the good looks of its leaders. We will look into that further, but for now we will calculate the full amount of the losses of Nafta-B as a result of the prohibited and illegal operations, including the initial losses and the costs of liquidating them: That amount already comprised more than $42.5 million.

The Daredevils Continue To Bluff

What could the Belgian-Soviet joint-stock company and its leaders expect as a result of all these desperate and nonetheless extremely careful steps? The company—complete financial collapse, and the leaders—jail. In short, a messy international scandal.

Here are the basic points that should have resulted in an official declaration of bankruptcy by Nafta-B according to Belgian law. The company had undergone enormous losses. Huge sums had been spent on currency speculation. The loans that had been taken—an attempt to delay the bankruptcy—were an aggravating circumstance. There was not a word about them in the documents for Belgian financial organs concerning losses sustained.

All of the aforementioned is dispassionately reflected in the mirror of Article 573, in the second section of the third volume of the commercial legislation of Belgium.

Did they indeed manage to evade the law?..

In the meantime an inspector came to Antwerp. He buried himself conscientiously in the papers and, being an experienced man, began to make one discovery after another. These discoveries did not make him happy.

How, for example, could he be happy that the general director of Nafta-B and its financial director, already well aware of what kind of losses their gambling on the increases and decreases of foreign currency would result in, continued their hopeless game, concluding more and more illegal transactions? What was that—an error? Recklessness? Something else?

And here is the most surprising and simply earthshaking discovery: According to the bookkeeping documents of the joint- stock company Nafta-B that were presented to the Belgian Government, the loan received from the Swiss firm had been transferred to the chief shareholder—Soyuznefteeksport. In the end, it was this organization that bore the real losses thanks to the gamblers of Nafta-B.

But this money never reached the account of Soyuznefteeksport! It disappeared as though dissolved into atoms!

One may suppose where the money, which could have served as a stimulus to our sickly economy, ended up. No, it did not go toward improving the material welfare of two or three Soviet and Belgian families even though you, the reader, may have been tempted to think that. Augmented by the increased interest rates, it was returned to the Banque de Paris. And Soyuznefteeksport, if it had a belt, could only pull it tighter around its waist: It would not see the lost money. It would never see the lost money.

And how does one explain the lively participation of the Swiss firm in the business of a Belgian-Soviet joint-stock company that is ideologically alien to it? It is time to expose the hidden ties in these intimate relations. Do not trust charity when it intrudes into commerce with a sweet smile. That smiling lady needs something.

The answer is that she needs our oil. For this money that the firm gave to the gambling company in the form of disinterested mutual aid, Soyuznefteeksport obligated itself to sell an enormous consignment of Soviet oil under extremely profitable conditions for the purchaser—3 million tons! That was only over one year, and there were further provisions for annual deliveries of 1.5 million tons—all via that same vehicle transmission, now turning in the wrong direction, the joint-stock company that had suffered so much and exhausted itself. Here was that life-saving loan that the compassionate firm offered, and the loan turned out to the firm's benefit. It was all a juggling trick. The firm was hardly going to let down its own people. Not those people. But what about us? What are we, country blockheads?!

"Lowball": The Gamblers Try Not To Take Any Tricks [subhead]

The makeup of the crime determined the consequences. Both directors of Nafta-B—the general and financial directors—were accused of causing loss to the state. The financial director, hanging his head, confessed his guilt. The general director took an aggressive stance, as they say in boxing, and began to launch attacks himself. It is an old truth: The best defense is a good offense.

"We live and work Belgium and can only answer to the laws of that country," he declared. "Soviet jurisdiction does not extend to us."

"Yes, but you are our man," said his investigator. "That means that you will have to answer according to our laws."

The investigator might well have reminded the general director that by Belgian law he could be locked up for a century and that the investigator was probably directed to do everything possible to avoid international publicity. In short, these wranglings lasted a rather long time until the investigation came to rest on Article 172 of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Criminal Code, which talks about "not appropriate to the execution of one's official duties," and the action itself was classified as negligence. The punishment? Imprisonment for a term of up to three years.

No, that is not a century!

However: In February 1988, the case was halted at the expiration of the statute of limitations. Imagine, $42.5 million! They will not be used to buy disposable syringes or sausage or even one can of food for anyone. Even as a runner-up prize.

"Yes," sighs the investigator for especially important affairs under the USSR general procurator, "we should have pursued this case earlier..." The statute of limitations for this article is only five years...

Searches were conducted of the houses of both of the heroes of this sad occasion—under the provisions of a decree concerning at least partial compensation of the damage that had been caused. It turned out that the financial director's house, so far as I know, was not especially luxurious, and nothing was confiscated. Valuables worth R41,000 were confiscated from the general director although he, too, was hardly a modern-day Croesus. They also secured his savings accounts, his property, and a "Mercedes." The procurator had no place to move the car to and it was left with its owner, who was strictly ordered not to drive it. I am convinced that he obeyed the order.

I should end this sorrowful story by agreeing that the leaders of the joint-stock company squandered state money without evil intention and add in this context that, after all, we do not intend to lose when we sit down to play cards. The people were unlucky—it happens...

I should also add that the suit brought by the deputy general procurator to compensate for the damage caused by the two leaders of the joint-stock company has not been reviewed in the Moscow City Court to this day, and in a certain sense the case remains unfinished.

I would be finished here if it were not for one more circumstance: What happened to Nafta-B is not an isolated instance. Even before Nafta-B this sort of thing has happened, although not on such a large scale. In essence, any joint-stock company headquartered abroad is in the complete control of the general director. Protected by the laws of that country on whose soil they are located, for us these companies become essentially uncontrollable. Investigate practically any of them, and abuse of one sort or another can be found in each.

And here is something else I suspect: Companies that secretly gamble in a similar fashion do it not without the secret approbation of officials from Moscow. They cannot permit such gambling officially—the risk is too great. To permit them would be the same as saying, "Do you know what, boys? Go to Monte Carlo and start playing the roulette wheel! Win for the glory of the Fatherland!"

Well, now I am prepared to set down that very short word that we see at the end of each "Sprut" show: FIN. Which in translation from Italian means "Finita la comedia," and in translation from the Flemish: "The end. Fin ansam [as transliterated]."

Legislation on Employment Published

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For the USSR Legislation on Employment published in the 25 January 1991 First Edition of SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, see the JPRS Report Soviet Union: Economic Affairs, JPRS-UEA-91-009, pages 49-61.

Agricultural

Stroyev Speaks at Rostov Seminar

914B0112A Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 5 Mar 91 pp 1-2

[Report on speech by Ye. Stroyev at Rostov seminar by Yu. Maksimenko and Yu. Semenenko, special SELSKAYA ZHIZN correspondents; date not given: "Multiple Structures—The Path to the Development of the Economy of the Agroindustrial Complex"]

[Text] Rostov Oblast—**As has already been reported in the press, in Rostov Oblast there was an all-Union conference-seminar on problems of developing a multistructured agrarian economy. During the course of the meetings in the labor collectives of the farms and enterprises, there was a lively discussion of the ways to establish multistructured forms of ownership and select management methods in the agrarian sector, and also the work of party organizations under conditions of the formation of market relations.**

Opening the seminar, Politburo member and secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Ye.S. Stroyev called for its participants to concentrate their attention on questions of practical implementation of the party agrarian policy and the tasks set by the 28th CPSU Congress for development of the agrarian economy.

The Right to a Free Choice

Rostov Oblast has a powerful agroindustrial potential. It also has its own approaches to the establishment of new forms of management that have been tested over the past years. The oblast party organization has a certain amount of experience in the development of diverse forms of ownership in rural areas, which is of interest to party organizations.

Speaking at the seminar, First Secretary of the Rostov Obkom [oblast committee] of the RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Communist Party B.T. Suslin gave examples that showed that the party organizations, soviets of people's deputies, and economic leaders were actively looking for ways to conduct economic reform in agroindustrial production and striving to give the peasants a free choice of management methods and forms of ownership.

The agroindustrial complex produces 36 percent of the oblast's income and 37 percent of all the consumer goods. The average annual volume of gross agricultural output exceeds 4.6 billion rubles [R]. The production of products per 100 hectares of arable land was R49,000 in 1986 and increased to R70,000 last year. During this time labor productivity increased by 42 percent.

The productivity of grain crops increased from 16.6 quintals under the 11th Five-Year Plan to 25 quintals under the last one, and last year it amounted to 33 quintals per hectare. During this period grain production increased from 5.4 million tons to 9.6 million tons. The oblast fulfilled the plans of the 12th Five-Year Plan for procurements of grain, sunflowers, and all animal husbandry products as a whole. But the population's demand for food products is still not being satisfied.

The fact that the food problem is constantly critical makes it necessary to establish more effective forms of management of the land. The work did not begin from scratch but through the assimilation of the brigade contract and economic accountability. At the center of the political work was protection of the interests of the peasant and the establishment of the peasant as the real master.

The party organizations used tested forms of influence—explanatory work through the mass media, personnel training, and party control. Scientific-practical conferences, sociological research, and public opinion polls made it possible to make the necessary adjustments. The economically accountable introduction center for new forms of management also exerted an influence.

Gradually we came to the conclusion that the real solution lies in improvement of the kolkhozes [collective farms] and sovkhozes [state farms] and not in the destruction of everything created during the years of Soviet power. The development of a multistructured economy is the most realistic path to reliable and stable functioning of the agroindustrial complex with the changeover to market relations. This will make it possible to utilize the created production potential more effectively for increasing food resources.

Various forms of management are developing in the oblast. With the transition to intrafarm leasing on the kolkhozes and sovkhozes independent economically accountable local labor collectives are being created. Significant work is being done for restoring the cooperative form of kolkhoz production. A great deal is being done for the development of private farmsteads and peasant and Western- style farms, and agroindustrial combines, agricultural firms, and other formations are being developed.

The party obkom and the local party committees are striving to support all these diverse forms of management, to create equal conditions for their establishment, and to help thinking and enterprising people who have initiative. Rural communists are taking an active position in the assimilation of leasing relations. Three thousand agricultural specialists, the majority of whom are party members, have joined leasing brigades. Leasing relations are applied on 72 percent of the kolkhozes and sovkhozes in the oblast. They cultivate 63 percent of the arable land and tend 45 percent of the livestock in animal husbandry. The new economic relations are becoming widespread in the sphere of processing and providing service for the agricultural complex.

The obkom secretary cited many examples of the effective work of lessees. The leasing collectives of K.N. Rachalovskiy from the Oktyabrskiy sovkhoz-tekhnikum in Aksayskiy Rayon, V.P. Biryukov from the Krasnyy Partizan Kolkhoz in Neklinovskiy Rayon, and V.I. Reutov from the Zarya kolkhoz in Peschanokopskiy Rayon obtain a yield of grain crops of 50-80 quintals per hectare, and sunflowers—more than 30 quintals per hectare. The milk yield per cow here is more than 4,500 kilograms.

The experience in close interaction between the party bureau and the administration of the Matveyevo-Kurganskiy fattening sovkhoz (party bureau secretary—N.F. Maliy, sovkhoz director—V.S. Butenko) is a kind of school for the development of new production relations. Two years ago all the subdivisions here changed over to leasing relations. Labor organization was based on family leasing collectives and extensive cooperation with the private farmsteads of the workers. There are 54 independent collectives working on the sovkhoz and more than 20 of them are family collectives that have signed long-term leases for all the land, livestock, and other means of production. The sovkhoz creates the material and moral conditions for the effective work of the leasing collectives.

As a result, the average annual production of the gross output on the sovkhoz increased 1.7-fold as compared to the 11th Five-Year Plan. The sovkhoz essentially became an association of independent leasing collectives, family farms, and cooperatives. The same thing can be said about the Pobeda Kolkhoz in Matveyevo-Kurganskiy Rayon.

Operating on the basis of the Matveyevo-Kurganskiy and Stepnoy sovkhozes last year were agricultural consortiums that not only combined their means but also brought in oblast administrations of the Agroprombank [Agricultural Industrial Bank] and Gosstrakh [Main Administration for State Insurance] as well as enterprises of the cities of Taganrog, Novocherkassk, and Donetsk for the development of agricultural production. This is advantageous for both parties.

The kolkhozes and sovkhozes today are the basic unit in the agrarian sector.

Great possibilities of increasing agricultural output lie in the development of private subsidiary farms of the citizens. There are now more than 467,000 of them in the oblast. Approximately half of them keep all kinds of livestock and poultry. Last year 62 percent of the rural families concluded agreements with farms for cooperation in raising animal husbandry products. This figure was given: As compared to the 11th Five-Year Plan, the average annual increase in the output of agricultural products in this sector was 21.8 percent. Last year sales of meat raised in cooperation with the population of the oblast amounted to more than 30 percent of the overall volume.

Agroindustrial combines and agricultural firms are gathering force. A certain share of the production of foodstuffs is accounted for by subsidiary farms of industrial enterprises, organizations, and institutions. An example of this is provided by the collectives of the Rostov helicopter production association, the Krasnyy kotelshchik and Rkostselmash plants, and the Rostovugol production association.

The practice of the enterprises of the city of Bataysk and the farms of Kagalnitskiy Rayon shows that it is possible to increase the food supply by investing funds from industry in the agrarian sector on the basis of agreements for cooperation.

Analyzing the problems that require the most rapid solution, V.T. Suslin mentioned first of all the strengthening of the material and technical base and the social restructuring of rural areas. The agrarian sector cannot develop without solving these problems. At the same time, as the speaker noted, a good deal can be done in the local areas. This includes establishing a business partnership between the industrial enterprises of the cities and the kolkhozes on a contractual basis, utilizing the capacities of agricultural machine building enterprises and scientific design institutions operating in the Don area for organizing production of agricultural machines and equipment needed by the farmers. Work is now being done on an oblast program for supporting farming that embraces the entire complex of issues, including the creation of a base for processing agricultural products.

Being a Skilled and Concerned Master

The verbal battles have been going on for so many years now: Who is the master of the land? One can understand why the discussions are so heated. For this is a fundamental issue in the restructuring of economic relations in rural areas. Participants in the seminar- conference, sharing their thoughts, emphasized that in this matter both haste and slowness are undesirable. They warned about possible mistakes that would be unavoidable if the reform were conducted behind the backs of the peasants and without taking their interests into account.

Immediate measures for implementing the reform were named. They included, first, an immediate inventory of all land and the creation of a special land fund of the local soviets. Second, agricultural land must be granted first of all to peasant farms, lessees, agricultural cooperatives, and also to citizens for private subsidiary farms, dacha construction, and garden and orchard raising. Third, the local soviets and party and social organizations must contribute actively to building up the land that has been allotted, help in the training of the future farmers, create favorable economic possibilities for them, and arrange interaction with kolkhozes, sovkhozes, processing enterprises, procurement organizations, and consumer cooperatives.

The land needs a skilled and concerned master. In Rostov Oblast a goal has been set to make sure that every resident of the oblast who is willing and able to work the land receives it for life with the right to pass it on to his offspring.

"It is also possible to have good masters without introducing private ownership of the land"—this idea was expressed at the seminar by the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, **A.I. Ikramov.** He corroborated this conviction with the following arguments. The republic's leading agricultural crop is cotton cultivated on irrigated land. When irrigated land is chopped up for private subsidiary farms, and there are very few per resident in Uzbekistan, the land commissions and committees leave the irrigation systems for the kolkhozes and sovkhozes. There simply can be no other solution considering the high cost and large scale of land reclamation facilities, the water shortage, and the need for an optimal combination of the interests of many people and the society as a whole. Moreover, the republic is not only preserving but in all ways strengthening the kolkhozes and sovkhozes, and leasing relations are being developed within them. The cultivation of cotton on large specialized farms makes it possible to mechanize labor almost completely and provide for introducing scientific achievements into practice.

A.I. Ikramov gave examples of the high effectiveness of various kinds of leasing in the republic's agroindustrial complex. Principles of leasing and the family contract are well worked out on the farms of Khorezm Oblast, because of which they managed to increase the productivity of cotton on the entire planted area by two quintals per hectare. Many family leasing and contracting collectives are receiving 40-45 quintals of raw cotton per hectare.

"The two years of experience in the operation of our kolkhoz, which has practically become an association of cooperatives," said the chairman of the Pobeda Kolkhoz in Matveyevo-Kurganskiy Rayon, **N.A. Kanoba,** "convinces us of the high level of effectiveness of this form of production organization. The 24 cooperatives—11 being production and 13 service—have signed leases on all the fixed capital, including the land. All the land has been divided up into crop rotations of 600-800 hectares. We keep track of expenditures, output, and services rendered with the help of checkbooks kept by the chairmen of the cooperators. The main thing achieved during the past two years has been a change in the peasants' attitude toward the land. They are becoming real masters of it. Because of this there has been a sharp increase in the productivity of grain, industrial, and feed crops. A reliable stockpile has been created for further strengthening the economy of previously less profitable farms."

The interest of the participants in the seminar was aroused by the facts and figures presented by the chairman of the Kolkhoz imeni Ordzhonikidze in the Dagestan ASSR, M.A. Shartayev. A new economic mechanism has been created here, whereby all members of the kolkhoz are involved in the results of the labor and are personally interested in having the land and other production capital of the farm produce a full return. Previously they had nothing but losses but in 1990 they received R2 million in profit and the level of profitability of production exceeded 100 percent. Each member of the kolkhoz receives dividends for his share, depending on the amount of labor he has invested.

The land reform will not produce the proper effect without a cautious and balanced approach, without taking many factors into account, above all the interests of the people living in the rural areas. Ignoring these conditions, which are observed in all civilized countries, will inevitably entail grave consequences. The head of the department for agrarian policy of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Lithuania (CPSU) **S.A. Gedraytis** discussed this using the example of the events that took place in Lithuania. The land reform conducted by a decision of the republic parliament envisions returning the land to its former owners, which leads, essentially, to the elimination of the sovkhozes and kolkhozes, to land speculation, and to exploitation of the peasants.

Problems of advancing the art of farming and increasing the fertility of the soil are dealt with thoroughly on the farms of Belorussia. During the years of the 12th Five-Year Plan the farms of Brest Oblast increased the average annual grain production by 35 percent, meat by 42 percent, and milk by 38 percent. The average grain productivity was 32.6 quintals per hectare. This was discussed at the seminar by the secretary of the Brest Obkom of the Communist Party of Belorussia, **V.P. Kunitskiy.** There are 157 farms and processing enterprises operating under leases in the oblast. Last year the rural farmsteads produced about 200,000 tons of milk or 17 percent of the overall volume of its procurements, 13,000 tons of potatoes, and other products. Each farmstead delivered 120 kilograms of commercial meat.

Equal Conditions for All Structures

Participants in the seminar were unified in their opinion that it is necessary to provide favorable conditions for all forms of ownership. Note should be taken of those who, under conditions of complete freedom of choice for the peasants, prove their ability to compete in the economic and social sense.

"Each region has its own conditions and its own possibilities of developing a multistructured agrarian economy," said the secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Ukraine, **I.G. Grintsov.** "Along with other forms of ownership, the kolkhozes and sovkhozes in the republic still constitute a large and stable source of production of agricultural products. To strengthen this sphere further, it is necessary to implement more persistently the plans that have been drawn up for social development of rural areas and improvement of production. Unfortunately, many problems have not yet been solved. We have not worked out a system of procurements and incentives to motivate people to expand production and state procurements of products. While in the extremely productive year of 1990 we did not create sufficient reserves of grain and feed in the country, this year with the same situation we cannot even store up as much as we did last year."

Under the conditions of the transition to a market economy party organizations cannot stay aloof from the crucial problems of rural areas. I.G. Grintsov thinks that, while contributing to the establishment of a diversity of forms of property and management, we must also be concerned about improving the administration of the economy and restructuring it, taking into account the new functional duties of the workers.

Great possibilities of increasing the food supply are shown by the results of the work of agricultural workers in the Stavropol area, which were presented at the seminar by the second secretary of the Stavropol Kray party committee, **Yu.V. Belyy.** Workers of the kray's agroindustrial complex have fulfilled the assignments of the 12th Five-Year Plan for all the main kinds of products. More than R1 billion have been invested in the development of agriculture during the past five years. The kray has no kolkhozes or sovkhozes that operate at a loss. The path to increasing the production of agricultural products is seen in expanding the number of leasing and contracting collectives and independent farmer subdivisions.

Price setting is still imperfect. And what is happening? In 1989 the kray's agroindustrial complex changed over to differentiated procurement prices. With the profitability level for grain at 100 percent, animal husbandry is still on the verge of operating at a loss. Even if the milk yields were 3,000 kilograms a year per cow, even then its profitability would be only 12 percent, and for meat products from animal husbandry it would be even lower—10 percent. Could lessees and independent farmers survive in this situation? No, they could not. The rural areas now have direct commodity exchange with industry. They trade grain and meat for materials and machines. It is not a market but a bazaar...

With the transition to the market and the diversity of forms of property in rural areas, in Yu.V. Belyy's opinion, it is necessary to defend more resolutely the position of protecting the interests of peasants and set up a flexible price mechanism and equivalent exchange between the country and the city, to create small enterprises for processing products on the farms, and to restore state structures for administration of the agroindustrial complex.

Analyzing the state of affairs in the agroindustrial complex and the level of the multiplicity of structures in the agrarian economy, participants in the seminar devoted special attention to the need for strengthening the material and technical base for agroindustrial production and creating equal economic conditions for all forms of ownership.

The director of the Kurgan Scientific Research Institute of Grain Farming **I.A. Sikorskiy**, referring to the practice of utilizing progressive technologies for raising corn on the farms of the scientific production system, noted that if they were to construct shops for processing sunflower seeds, it would be possible to considerably reduce imports of sunflower oil. But where can they get the technological equipment?

Justifiable alarm is expressed in connection with the reduction and even halting of deliveries of soil herbicides to the farms. This could lead to a reduction of the grain and feed yields and, consequently, to a decrease in the production of animal husbandry products as well.

"The sovkhoz has been more than a sponsor for our seed farm," said a farmer from the Matveyevo-Kurganskiy Sovkhoz in Rostov Oblast **N.T. Yurov.** "It has leased us land for 50 years and sold us a tractor and cows and hogs. It allots feed, renders assistance in the construction of animal husbandry premises and residential buildings, takes back the fattened cattle, and so forth. Because of this our family of four in 1988 produced 22 tons of meat; in 1989, 53 tons; and last year, 107 tons. This is in addition to other products. Our example has been followed by 17 other family collectives who have become lessees. Because of the new production relations, the sovkhoz sharply increased the production of products, caught up with the others, and was able to invest considerable amounts in solving sociocultural problems.

Crucial problems in industrial poultry raising were discussed in the speech by the general director of the BPNO [expansion not identified] Soyuzptitseprom, **V.I. Fisinin.** The production problem cannot be solved without a clear-cut program for the development of this branch. The level of production of poultry meat and eggs is still low. We must proceed more resolutely toward cooperation between Ptitseprom enterprises and the private subsidiary farms of the citizens, kolkhozes, and sovkhozes. It is necessary to increase the output of technological equipment for poultry farms.

An appreciable increase in the production of highly nutritious meat could be achieved by raising geese. They are doing well in the Russian Federation and the Ukraine. In Donetsk Oblast, for example, they raise 2 million geese a year—11 geese for each rural farmyard. At the same time, on the whole, a number of oblasts practically do not engage in this advantageous work.

As a result of the reduction of the weight gain of poultry by one gram per head because of the shortage of feeds, we fail to receive 80,000 tons of poultry meat in the country as a whole. This is what it costs us when we violate agreements for deliveries of mixed feeds to poultry farms. With this approach will they be able to survive under the conditions of a market economy?

A stable pattern has developed in certain circles: Blame the kolkhozes and sovkhozes for everything. But are they really to blame for the fact that not enough agricultural products are produced in the country?

"By no means," thinks the deputy chairman of the State Commission of the USSR Council of Ministers for Food and Procurements, **B.I. Poshkus.** The potential of the sovkhozes and kolkhozes has not been exhausted and will not be for a long time to come. It is just a matter of relieving them of the administrative fetters that have been constraining them for decades, changing economic relations within the farms, providing for price parity, revising the imperfect policy for procurement of products, and radically improving material and technical supply. He drew attention to the great possibilities of a sharp increase in the production of products in the sphere of a multistructured economy. It is a multistructured economy that opens up the path to interaction of the sovkhozes and kolkhozes with private subsidiary farms and other structures.

The Best Experience—Into Widespread Practice

"The recent combined plenum of the CPSU Central Committee and Central Audit Commission," said **Y.S. Stroyev** "spoke out resolutely in favor of the irreversibility of the economic transformations, a transition to market relations, a land reform, and the development of a multistructured economy while retaining the priority of collective forms of ownership. But the economic reform is proceeding in a complex and contradictory way. As a result of the inadequately thought-out and slowly reformed production relations, we have seen negative processes in the organization of production and distribution of products. Production ties among the regions of the country have been violated. This has led to a breakdown of supply of the agroindustrial complex with material and technical resources which, in turn, has complicated the situation in the food market.

Analysis shows that in places where party committees, working closely with soviets of people's deputies and other social organizations, use diverse forms of political influence and actively deal with problems of leadership of the economy—in these places both order and discipline are maintained and the economic indicators are higher. The best results in the development of agriculture, especially in grain, meat, and dairy production, were achieved last year by many kolkhozes and sovkhozes of Rostov Oblast, Stavropol Kray, and Belgorod, Lipetsk, Orel, Lugan, Kherson, Volyn, Brest, Grodno, Tselinograd, Dzhambul, Taldy-Kurgan, and a number of other oblasts.

At the same time the assignments of the Food Program were fulfilled only for the production of milk and eggs. There was an insignificant increase in the volumes of food products per capita. Recently there has been a marked reduction of the production of meat, fish products, and tobacco items. There was actually no increase and there was even a reduction of production volumes in Kurgan, Yaroslav, Smolensk, Pskov, and several other oblasts. There was a large drop in the production of all kinds of products in the Baltic republics and Transcaucasia. This is creating considerable difficulties in the food market. There was a sharp decline of delivery discipline to the republic and Union food supplies.

One of the ways of overcoming the negative processes taking place in the agroindustrial complex is to be found in the development of a multistructured economy in rural areas. The position of the Central Committee is to give space to all forms of property and management, to create equal conditions and a unified support mechanism for these structures, and to reveal the most effective directions.

The multistructured system, noted the Central Committee secretary, has already found its way into the agrarian economy. The predominant form are still the kolkhozes and sovkhozes, which undoubtedly require reorganization of their internal structures and extensive integration with other forms.

Leasing relations have become most widespread. To one extent or another, they have already been assimilated by more than 35,000 kolkhozes and sovkhozes. They are the basis for the formation of local cooperatives, family farms, and specialized teams, and the farms themselves are being transformed into associations and conglomerates. This is essentially the initial stage in the withdrawal of the state and the granting of complete independence to collective forms of ownership.

As the participants in the seminar were shown, in Rostov Oblast there are already more than 6,000 leasing collectives, family farms, and other structures in operation and they unite more than 100,000 people. As a rule, they are distinguished by a high level of labor effectiveness. On the Matveyevo-Kurganskiy Sovkhoz, for example, economically accountable subdivisions have leased all the land, livestock, and other means of production, and cooperation is developing between the public farm and the private farmyard. And here is the result: Under the past five-year plan production here increased 1.7-fold. It is also important that labor productivity increased by 42 percent in the past four years alone and the profitability of the farms increased appreciably.

Shared forms of ownership of public property have been developing more and more of late. The initiator was the Kolkhoz imeni Ordzhonikidze in the Dagestan ASSR where the chairman is M.A. Chartayev. This made it possible for him to double product output in five years. The first secretary of the Kazankovskiy party raykom, V.G. Doroshenko, having studied this experience, organized a changeover of the entire rayon to this form of management. Today this example is being followed by more than 150 farms of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belorussia.

It is interesting to consider the creation of joint stock companies and public enterprises on the basis of state property through buying up the fixed capital. This was done, for example, in the Stavropolskoye broiler production association, and the Klyuchevskiy Sovkhoz in Saratov Oblast, the Liskinskiy in Voronezh Oblast, and the Sultanyangiyurtovskiy in the Dagestan ASSR.

Difficulties with providing food pushed the industrial enterprises toward the creation of joint agricultural associations and agricultural combines. There are already more than 600 such formations in the country.

Independent peasant and farmer farms are becoming more and more active. According to data of the State Committee for Statistics, there are already more than 40,000 of them.

Speaking of the tasks of party organizations, Comrade Stroyev emphasized the crucial need to support in all ways the development of a multistructured system and to stand at the head of this movement. This is what was done, for example, on the Volkovskiy sovkhoz in Mtsenskiy Rayon in Orel Oblast. A year ago Anna Vasilyevna Balbalova and her husband organized a family farm here. The sovkhoz built for them next to their house a minifarm for 40 head of cattle, which cost a little more than R20,000. During the past year Anna Vasilyevna has produced more than 126,000 tons of milk—4,858 kilograms from each cow with a production cost of R23.6 per quintal. The indicators for the sovkhoz itself are much more modest.

Many peasant farms are springing out of private farmyards, which already produce almost one-fourth of all the agricultural products. Uzbekistan acted correctly by allotting an additional 165,000 hectares to the private subsidiary farms, and this year they have decided to increase this area to 500,000 hectares. This measure alone made it possible for the republic to increase the number of head of cattle, cows, and sheep.

The Rostov Oblast party organization is working actively, being purposefully engaged in solving concrete economic problems. The perestroyka initiative is strictly followed here and they have been able to find political approaches that made it possible to develop a multistructured economy. The CPSU Central Committee has studied in detail the work of the Rostov Oblast party organization and given it a positive evaluation. It is very important for the experience accumulated in political leadership of the restructuring of economic relations in the agroindustrial complex to be widely applied in the activity of oblast, kray, and republic party organizations.

The core of a multistructured economy is a radical land reform and the ensurance of more efficient use of our main wealth—the land. The CPSU position in this issue was determined by the decisions of the 28th party congress, the subsequent Central Committee plenums, and the USSR president's ukase concerning land reform in the country, Ye.S. Stroyev continued. These documents emphasize that private ownership of the land is unacceptable and that the party is in favor of turning it over for the possession and use of all who want to engage in commercial production and have the appropriate preparation. Moreover, disbanding kolkhozes and sovkhozes without the agreement of the collectives themselves is prohibited.

Time passes quickly and we must not drag out the implementation of measures for land reform. Communists should take the initiative and join land commissions and committees, organizing open consultation with the peasants and providing social protection for this in this situation.

The Central Committee secretary singled out two important conditions: With all the transformations of land relations it is necessary to provide for maintaining and increasing the fertility of the soil and not to allow a reduction of the area of productive land. For in the past 25 years alone the country has lost more than 27 million hectares of cultivated land. Now there are only 0.78 hectares per person.

Ye.S. Stroyev devoted a special place in his speech to market relations. In the foreground is the problem of price setting, including price parity for agricultural and industrial products and compensation for unsubstantiated increases in the cost of deliveries to the agroindustrial complex. The second problem is the market—the freedom of the producer. Unfortunately, difficulties in the supply of food, especially unjustified interruptions in the reciprocal sale of material resources, essentially nullify these efforts.

Under these conditions it is necessary to have a unified all- Union market where the peasant could acquire means of production and the state would retain the right to control and regulate these relations until balance is achieved between food and material and technical resources.

One cannot think seriously about improving the economy, he went on to emphasize, without implementing a policy of protectionism with respect to the rural areas. Can one really count on an influx of fresh forces if housing, living, medical, and cultural services here are considerably worse while prices of food and consumer goods are much higher than they are in the cities?

But here is what puts us on our guard. Having been given the opportunity to solve the majority of these problems independently, local soviets of people's deputies are far from fully taking advantage of this opportunity. This is why we need radical structural changes in the country's economy, we need target programs, and we need people who not only have conviction but are also capable of carrying out this about-face.

Kazakhstan is acting correctly now by bringing this question up at a special congress of people's deputies intended to earmark large, nonstandard approaches to the development of rural areas. The same initiative was presented by Vinnitsa Oblast in Belorussia. An immense amount of assistance in building up rural areas, and especially peasant farms, can and should be rendered by industrial enterprises, taking into account the fact that this is the shortest path to improving the food supply for their labor collectives.

Considerable space in the speech of the secretary of the CPSU Central Committee was devoted to questions of the material and technical and scientific support for the agroindustrial complex and the strengthening of contractual deliveries of technical equipment, metal, spare parts, timber, fuel, and other resources.

Concluding his speech, Ye.S. Stroyev expressed the hope that the seminar-conference would be useful primarily for recognizing concrete work experience, exchanging opinions, and developing tactics and strategy for activity in solving this exceptionally important problem in the life of the society—stabilization and improvement of the provision of food for the population today and in the future.

Military

General on Withdrawal From Germany

LD1103094391 Moscow TASS in English 0907 GMT 11 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Oleg Moskovsky]

[Text] Moscow march 11 TASS—"The schedule of pullout of the Soviet Western Army Group from German territory by the end of 1994, determined by the Soviet-German treaty, has placed us in tough conditions," Soviet Deputy Defence Minister for Building and Quartering Troops Colonel-General Nikolay Chekov told TASS.

Speaking in connection with the beginning of building housing for Soviet troops pulled out of Germany, Chekov said the Soviet side had to do a lot to place the troops on Soviet territory.

Chekov said the plan and schedule of the pullout had been agreed upon and handed over to the German side at the end of December, 1990, as envisaged by the treaty. "The plan takes into account the need for the German side to apportion money for residential building for offices and their families," the general said.

According to Chekov, a total of 550,000 servicemen will be pulled out of Germany within four years. "Housing for officers' families should be built timely in the European part of the Soviet Union," he said.

Taking into account that some 54,000 families in the Western Army Group have no residence in the Soviet Union, a great amount of work should be done, Chekov said.

There are serious difficulties in implementing the plan. "Agreements with Germany to build 36,000 flats, using its money, do not fully solve all problems of accommodating servicemen's families, as the demand is twice greater," Chekov said.

"To implement the housing construction programme, the Conversiya- Zhilye Consortium, including several Western Army Group repair works, has been set up at the Soviet Defence Ministry. A German building firm is expected to take part in the consortium's work," Chekov said.

Joint Forces Commander on Warsaw Pact

PM0703140291 Moscow IAN PRESS RELEASE in English 25 Feb 91

[Unattributed interview with Army General Petr Lushev, Commander of the Warsaw Treaty Organization Joint Armed Forces; place and date not given; first paragraph is introduction: "General Lushev on the Dissolution of the Warsaw Pact"]

[Text] The Warsaw Pact foreign and defence ministers are to meet in Budapest on February 25 to decide on dissolving the bloc's military structures on 1 April 1991. Commander of the Warsaw Treaty Organization Joint Armed Forces, General of the Army Petr Lushev talks here to Novosti about the likely consequences:

[IAN] Won't the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact military structures weaken the security of the USSR and other member states or harm the security of Europe as a whole?

[Lushev] It should be recalled that the Warsaw Pact and its military structures were created in 1955 in response to the creation of NATO six years previously. As a result of the cooperative efforts of the Warsaw Pact countries military and strategic parity was achieved between the two alliances.

New political thinking has necessitated the adoption of an entirely new approach to the relations between states and alliances. The Warsaw Pact countries initiated the relaxation of international tension and disarmament and adoped a strictly defensive military doctrine.

The policy pursued by the Warsaw Pact, the development of the CSCE (Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe) process and the first conventional force reductions in Europe have created conditions for an overhaul of the Warsaw Pact and NATO.

Opportunities have arisen for a gradual transformation of the military-political alliances into political alliances and the creation, in the long run, of a European security model without any alliances.

As for the Soviet security in the new situation, we believe that the adoption by the USSR of the military policy of reasonable defence sufficiency, based on maximum use of high technology, will guarantee its defence capability. The changed situation in Europe and the dramatic lowering of the level of military confrontation are also a major factor.

Thanks largely to Soviet assistance, the other Warsaw Pact countries now have modern armies capable of defending their interests. Our countries have good-neighbourly relations, which allow them to broaden mutually beneficial co-operation on a bilateral basis in all fields. Given mutual consent, military co-operation is not ruled out after 1 April.

We believe that the dissolution of the military structures of the Warsaw Pact will not harm European security. Moreover, it will strengthen trust and political and military stability in the region.

[IAN] Is there any chance that NATO will reciprocate in response to the disbandment of the Warsaw Pact's military organisation?

[Lushev] There are signs indicating that NATO may review its strategy. NATO leaders have spoken out in favour of further lowering of military confrontation and adjusting the alliance to the new conditions. They have expressed the readiness to build a new Europe. However, their position is based on the preservation of NATO as a strong alliance.

The London meeting of the NATO Councils, held last July, passed a decision to consider possible changes in the alliance's strategy and the structure of its armed forces. Later in Brussels it was announced that a new strategy concept would be adopted in the Spring of 1991.

As you can see, the NATO leadership is in no hurry to transform the alliance. Our view is that "a common European home" does not need military alliances and we hope the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact military organisation will be followed by corresponding moves by NATO.

[IAN] How will the transformation of the Warsaw Pact affect the future of the Declaration of Non-Aggression between the Warsaw Pact and NATO, which was signed in Paris last November?

[Lushev] The declaration was signed not between the alliances but between 22 states. That is why it is officially called the "Joint Declaration of Twenty-two States".

It pledges its signatories not to use force or the threat of force against territorial integrity or political independence of any state, permits the use of armed forces for self-defence only and declares that the security of each country is inextricably linked with the security of all CSCE states. In short, it is, undoubtedly, a long-term agreement.

Baltic Republics

Consultations Begin for USSR Talks With Estonia

LD0803165691 Tallinn Domestic Service in Estonian 1500 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Today, experts began consultations on preparing for talks between the Governments of the Republic of Estonia and the USSR, organized by the USSR Peace Committee. A few months ago the committee sent a telegram to the Government of the Republic of Estonia which proposed mediation in the talks between the USSR and the Republic of Estonia, which ran into a deadlock last year [words indistinct].

Consultations of (?three days) will take place [passage indistinct]. It consists of 10 experts and consultants, among them USSR Ambassador [words indistinct] Igor Grischenko [words indistinct] at the Patrice Lumumba University [word indistinct] of international law. There are seven experts present, representing departments connected with relations of Estonia and the USSR—USSR Defense Ministry, Planning Committee, Ministry of Internal Affairs [words indistinct]. There are also seven mediators and representatives of public organizations on the list, mainly from the Peace Committee and the USSR Peace Fund.

The aim of the consultations is to determine the subject of the talks and [words indistinct] and a possible agenda for the talks.

[Words indistinct] accurately and without prejudice the interests of both sides, and with what kind of positions the sides will enter the talks.

The third possible area of agreement will be [words indistinct] to determine the problems in conflict with the relations with the USSR, and which could be resolved or brought closer with the mediation of public organizations on both sides.

On the Estonian side, a large group of specialists in international law will take part in the consultations. The Estonian delegation is led by minister Endel Lippmaa. Lennart Meri, Republic of Estonia foreign minister, is expected to take part.

Estonian Official Requests Czechoslovak Help

AU0803170491 Prague CTK in English 2149 GMT 5 Mar 91

[Text] Tallinn March 5 (CTK correspondent)— Czechoslovakia can help Estonia in the near future mainly in three areas, the Estonian parliament's vice president, Mariju Lauristin, told visiting Czechoslovak parliamentarians here today.

The first and most important step would be the opening of Estonian Information Centers in Prague and Bratislava, she said. The Czechoslovak deputies were visiting the Baltic republics as observers of last Sunday's plebiscites on independence.

The second way Czechoslovakia could help, according to Lauristin, would be to push for the organization of a second international conference on the Baltics, which the former East Bloc countries would also take part in. The first conference is scheduled to take place in Copenhagen in May, where the future of the Baltic republics will be discussed by Scandinavian officials.

Economic relations is the third area in which Estonia could benefit from Czechoslovak support, explained the Estonian parliamentarian, as the Baltic republics are now attempting to form a common market to serve as an economic bridge between the developed Scandinavian countries and Central and Eastern Europe.

Lauristin explained that the limiting factor for the development of a Baltic common market is the fact that Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are economically dependent on the Soviet Union. An increase in economic contacts with Czechoslovakia could help reduce this dependence, she said.

The results of Sunday's referendum, in which only 100,000 out of 1,133,000 registered Estonian voters said "no" to the renewal of an independent and democratic Estonia, were described by Lauristin as "the most important political argument why Moscow should begin to speak seriously with us."

But the vice president of the Estonian parliament rejected the idea of an Estonian declaration of independence, saying that as long as the Soviet Army remains on Estonian territory such a declaration would be meaningless.

Estonia's Savisaar on Yeltsin, January Events

LD0803183291

[Editorial Report] Tallinn Estonian Television Network in Estonian at 1935 GMT on 28 February broadcasts a one-hour recording of a news conference by Estonian President Edgar Savisaar with several unidentified Estonian journalists at the Toompea Palace in Tallinn. The video shows the journalists sitting at a long table and Savisaar answering their questions from a rostrum at one end of the table.

The first question is about the situation in the USSR. Savisaar talks bout Yeltsin in some detail. He sees Yeltsin's position as quite a firm one, and gives reasons why this is so: Yeltsin has strengthened his relations with other republics, with the Democratic Russia bloc, and has installed a new security committee chaired by Colonel Generel (?Kobets), who was previously Moiseyev's deputy.

Savisaar then talks of the Baltic situation. He says that Baltic analysts in the Kremlin predicted that no referendums would be held in the Baltic republics because of the strong influence of nationalist radicals. "In this sense I think that, after 15 January, this was their second big disappointment."

A journalist asks Savisaar what is known of what was meant to happen in Estonia on 15 January. Savisaar says that there are gaps in the information and little proof. "Well, I would like to recall the sequence of events. On 10 January, Kuzmin's deputies were dispatched. General (?Ovcharov) went to Vilnius; General (?Dailaov) to Estonia; and Kuzmin himself stayed in Latvia; so that they partially spread out in a way. The following day, on the 11th, according to our information, commanders of some units gathered here, and between them sites were distributed to be taken under control, and so on. That was on the 11th. On Saturday 12 January, Kuzmin announced that on the 13th, 2,000 paratroopers would be arriving in Estonia—in Tallinn and Klooga. On THe 13th they were due, but that was canceled because meanwhile the Federation Council had met and we succeeded in changing things. On the 14th they were due to be stationed and on the 15th, after the popular rally and once a general strike was announced, events were to start, as we understand. This was the general scenario," Savisaar says.

"We have also heard about some contacts which Oleg Semenovich Shenin, secretary of CPSU Central Committee, had in those days with Estonian politicians—I have 13 January in mind—and there is some more information." Savisaar recalls that in Latvia and Lithuania, Salvation Committees were set up as opposed to the Estonian Coordination Committee, which has not been disbanded to his knowledge.

Savisaar says: "I would draw particular attention to a piece of later material, namely that IZVESTIYA carried a news item about the departure of KGB chief Kryuchkov's first deputy, Bobkov, and two department heads—one retiring, one leaving for another post. That is, they all were men who to some degree were connected with the Baltics." He recalls that Kryuchkov's first deputy paid an official visit to Estonia last summer. "This is also a sign of something. I think that now they have been replaced by younger men, I believe that coup attempts similar to the 1940 kind will no longer be organized here. Should there be one it will be much more subtle and cleverer than that. Another thought to conclude, namely: did you notice that any interest in rounding up our lads disappeared just like that, didn't it? So that at the time it was a pretext of a kind, which is what we thought."

A question is asked about the Narva free economic zone. Savisaar defends at some length his support of the idea. He pulls out a recent newspaper cutting where the Estonian Committee accuses him of selling Narva off. And now, more about the article: HALLASTE writes here that Narva enterprises will be given big benefits, foreign firms will be given special rights, and this all means Narva separating from the rest of the republican territory, which will result in major economic, political, and moral problems." Savisaar explains what benefits Narva willa actually be given. If the town earns hard currency it will be allöwed to keep enough back to build hotels; there will be tax allowances for money spent on ecology and benefits for joint ventures; in other words, they are all just tax benefits and not so unique in themselves.

Narva proposed the idea of a free economic zone two years ago—so far the answer has been no.

In conclusion Savisaar talks about the current price freeze, changes in the police, and when asked to predict the 3 March referendum results, is willing to hazard a guess—about 80 percent turn out and 70 percent in favor of an independent Estonia.

Latvia's Cirulis Rejects Cooperation on Referendum

LD0803235191 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1830 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] USSR People's Deputy Andrejs Cirulis has informed us that today he received a telegram from USSR Supreme Soviet Chairman Anatoliy Lukyanov, which requests that he cooperate with the USSR Supreme Council in holding the 17 March referendum.

Andrejs Cirulis has already sent a reply saying he cannot comply with this request because 91 percent of his electates in Bauska rayon have already voted for a free, democratic Latvia, and this also fully corresponds to his own political opinions. Furthermore, Andrejs Cirulis has told Anatoliy Lukyanov that the majority of inhabitants in Latvia, and personally the USSR deputy himself, support the 4 May Declaration.

Latvian People's Front Leader on Union Referendum

LD0803132591 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 0631 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] The standpoint of the Latvian People's Front on the question of the 17 March referendum will be expressed by Romualds Razuks, the chairman of the Latvian People's Front.

[Begin Razuks recording] Esteemed People's Front members, we shall be just as energetic and united also on 17 March. We shall not allow any provocations. We shall not allow ourselves to be provoked, and we shall not even go near those 17 March USSR referendum polling stations. Let the Army, the CPSU, the Voluntary Society for the Promotion of the Army, Aviation and Navy and those who would have the intention, organize them, but this referendum will have no state, no juridical significance, because the Republic of Latvia will simply not participate with quite a number of other states and USSR republics. [end recording]

Latvian Town Council To Join Union Referendum

LD0803151191 Riga Domestic Service in Latvian 1300 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Ignoring the resolution of the Supreme Council of Latvia, the Presidium of the Rezekne town council has decided to participate in the USSR referendum. An election commission has been formed with 13 members of the bureau of the Rezekne town branch. The period of activity for the polling stations election commissions has been extended.

Latvia's Godmanis, Soviet Interior Official Meet

LD0903140591 Riga International Service in Latvian 0530 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Ivars Godmanis, chairman of the Latvian Council of Ministers, met USSR Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Vitaliy Sidorov, who has come to Latvia on behalf of his chief to find out about the internal affairs problems here.

Talking about the future activity of the special tasks unit, the so-called black berets, and the procuracies, Sidorov agreed that these structures should recognize the resolutions of the highest state power structure of the Republic of Latvia—the Supreme Council—and that the future existence of two procuracies was not permissible. He added it would be possible to discuss the future fate of the so-called black berets after their criminal case and investigation have been completed.

The republic's minister of internal affairs, Aloizs Vaznis, and the heads of the republc's militia department and the Riga militia department participated in the talks. Ivars Godmanis also acquainted Vitaliy Sidorov with the political and economic situation of Latvia, explained the government's intended projects to protect the poor.

Workers Protest Latvian TV Program 'Sabotage'

PM1103090391 Riga SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA in Russian 7 Feb 91 p 1

[Undated letter from "Commutator" plant employees: "Stop TV Sabotage"]

[Text] Latvian television and radio have recently started to systematically cut off Union television and radio broadcasts giving a truthful interpretation of the political events occurring in Latvia and exposing the rampant nationalism, totalitarianism, and fascism in our country.

Thus there is a flagrant and unconcealed breach of the norms of democracy, glasnost, and the pluralism of opinions, to which respected local champions of human rights so zealously pay lip service. Here are the facts.

1. On 1 February 1991 the Leningrad "600 Seconds" program was cut off as soon as USSR People's Deputy V. Alksnis started talking about how many weapons were distributed in Latvia and to whom they were distributed. On 3 February Latvian Television switched off transmission of Central Television's Channel 2 and in its place started to broadcast a sports program from Riga. Transmission of "600 Seconds" was again cut off 4 February.

We categorically protest such acts of television sabotage and remind their organizers and perpetrators that television is a state organization maintained by contributions from all taxpayers, including the half of the population of non-Latvian nationality that lives and works in Latvia. We will never waive our legal rights to the mass media, whatever the cost! There is an example of the consequences of such usurpation: It was precisely this that provoked the incident that took place at the television center building.

[Signed] Employees of the "Commutator" plant—25 signatures in all

Nevzorov, Militia Commander Cited on Attack

PM0803160191 Riga SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA in Russian 5 Feb 91 p 3

[Interview with Leningrad television journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov and Ceslaw Mlinnik, commander of the Special-Purpose Militia Detachment (OMON), by unidentified correspondents of the "Sodruzhestvo" radio station under the "Topic of the Day" rubric—place, date not given; first paragraph is introduction: "Who Was the Target of the Attack—Nevzorov or OMON?"]

[Text] On the night of 2 February, shots rang out in Riga. Correspondents of the "Sodruzhestvo" radio station interviewed eyewitnesses to the incident, not far from Viestura Prospect. One of them was Leningrad television journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov. Here is how he describes the events of that night.

[Nevzorov] I think our car's appearance on the scene was no surprise to the attackers. I honestly suggest that they were blasting not at me, but at our friend, the chief of the OMON, although I do not rule out an attempt on my own life. We arrived in Riga at about 2100 hours. I did not particularly want to attract special attention and get mixed up in some situation, because I could see how our wonderful democratic press—which interprets its work as painting for the umpteenth time the picture of how the OMON attacked the peaceful civilian population—would cover this. I am not the best witness. I was, unfortunately, totally unprepared for such a situation, and if I managed to get something on film, it is, of course, simply a miracle. But get something on film I did. Just like a genuine picture, even if there are two fir trees in the frame, darkness and tracer bullets—these are genuine battle scenes which have only one drawback, namely, that you do not know where anything is coming from and who is running where, and you can't turn a flashlight on.

[Correspondent] Your interview with Viktor Alksnis, broadcast on Leningrad television, was interrupted by a local news program.

[Nevzorov] I congratulate you. I can only promise that I will send a videotape which you can broadcast in a radio version. I think that it is precious and important for all people who do not want blood, war, discord, or hatred in this land.

[Correspondent] You were fired on?

[Nevzorov] To put it mildly. I looked later at where the holes were left in the door: It is impressive. The car exploded and caught fire. We managed by some miracle to jump out, in general I understood nothing. We were driving, chatting peacefully—and suddenly all this: Glass shattered, something flared, there was a flash, there was swearing. Then I found myself in some ditch, and I remember that Ceslaw shouted: "Stay down." I switched on the flash, crawled out, and started taking pictures.

[Correspondent] It seems to me that they are trying to silence a progressive journalist?

[Nevzorov] I am no progressive journalist but a professional reporter who has an urge to tell the truth. I believe that we must preserve the Union at any cost. We have no other way of saving the lives, dignity, and honor of the Russian-speaking population living outside Russia. Otherwise they will turn you here into menial laborers and slaves; they will ban you from speaking Russian. Then you'll have to fight for yourselves with assault rifles. It is better not to allow this. The peoples have grown together, have become part of one another in all the republics to such an extent that a rift of this kind is impossible without bloodshed. We are talking about the blood of hundreds of thousands of people.

[SOVETSKAYA LATVIYA editorial note] OMON Commander Ceslaw Mlinnik also expressed his view on the event.

[Mlinnik] Leningrad TV journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov and his camera crew arrived in Latvia on the evening of 2 February. They planned to meet inhabitants of the republic and collect material on the prevailing political situation. We left the OMON base at about 0200. Not far from Viestura Prospect, near the railway crossing, our Volga car was fired on. A grenade was thrown into it, and only his experience as a former stuntman enabled Nevzorov to get his bearings in time and jump out of the car, which we also abandoned.

An exchange of fire began. But we were unable to return aimed fire, so we used our weapons purely for effect. The criminals managed to get away. Two men were later detained on suspicion. Coded cipher messages and a journal with notes on the movement of our cars were found on them.

They fired tracer bullets. One hit the fuel tank and our car caught fire. No one was injured or killed. I think that provocation against the OMON is being used to pressure the division's leadership into withdrawing us from the republic.

[Correspondent] I have just seen the virtually completely burned-out Volga. It is quite a curious spot there—on one side a forest, on the other, a forest and houses. Which side did they shoot from?

[Mlinnik] In my opinion it was all planned. If we had opened aimed fire at the shots that were coming from the direction of the houses, we would have hit the windows. The glass would have shattered, and all this might have been shown once again as proof of OMON atrocities.

[Correspondent] How many men may have been involved in the attack?

[Mlynnik] Not more than two men, it seemed to me, who were using automatic weapons.

[Correspondent] How many people were traveling in the car?

[Mlynnik] Four: the chief of staff, the detachment NCO, the journalist Nevzorov, and myself at the wheel.

[Correspondent] These bullets and the grenade, were they destined for you or for Nevzorov, in your opinion?

[Mlynnik] As far as we know, "Sajudis" condemned Nevzorov to the supreme penalty for his work in the Baltic. This could be one of the options for executing this sentence, and at the same time an attempt to settle scores with the OMON.

[Correspondent] What do you think? Was this attack in earnest or from a desire to scare?

[Mlynnik] We should not talk only of an attempt to scare. Three bullets could be clearly seen to pass by Nevzorov's head. One grazed his collar. Also, a bullet passed through the door on the side where the NCO was sitting. Literally three centimeters from his chest.

[Correspondent] Did you not interpret this attack as a trap with the aim of luring men from the base and attacking them here in the woods?

[Mlynnik] Of course, this is one of their tricks. Although I do not think that people in their right senses could try something of that sort. There are residential houses next to the base, and innocent people might have been injured. True, we were able to satisfy ourselves 20 January that they do not set much store by this.

[Correspondent] What conclusions can you draw from what happened? What happens next?

[Mlynnik] We must be prepared for everything. The reactionary forces in the republic will go to any lengths to create a situation in which OMON will have to be withdrawn from the territory of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. We are convinced that we are the guarantors of security for people who remain true to Soviet standpoints, and for their families.

[Correspondent] How did these events affect Nevzorov?

[Mlynnik] He remains cheerful. And we are trying to adopt all measures to prevent the recurrence of such an event.

Lithuanian Legislature's Warning on Referendum

LD0803233891 Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] The Presidium of the Lithuanian legislature has issued a statement which notes that, disregarding the fact that the Lithuanian Government has clearly defined its stance regarding the 17 March Soviet Union referendum, that country's state organs, assisted by CPSU organizations, are actively attempting to prepare this referendum in Lithuania.

Because of their interference and the pressure exerted by them, certain municipal councils and the heads of so-called all-Union jurisdiction enterprises, in violation of Lithuania's laws, have adopted decisions to organize this referendum.

The Presidium of Lithuania's legislature declares that such actions by certain municipality and enterprise leaders assists the Soviet Union's, and particularly the Soviet Communist Party's, attempt to smother the sovereignty of the Lithuanian Republic and the integrity of its [word indistinct]. This is reprehensible and punishable.

With this warning, the Presidium of the Lithuanian legislature addresses municipalities, officials, enterprises, and organization leaders, urging them to obstruct such hostile, criminal activity.

Citizens are exhorted not to contribute to the CPSU political intrigues, not to augment tension, and not to become involved in provocations, which aim to split the Lithuanian public. The most correct citizens' stance, with respect to these actions, is to reject and not participate, notes the statement of the Lithuanian legislature's Presidium.

Moscow on Problems of Referendum in Lithuania

LD0803234391 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1800 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] As a TASS correspondent has been informed by Bobylev, chairman of the Vilnius Constituency Referendum Commission, constituencies and polling stations for voting already have been fully set up in the Lithuanian capital. All constituency and polling station commissions for carrying out the USSR referendum have been registered. Numerous phone calls to the constituency and the polling station commissions prove that there are a sufficient number of people in Vilnius who wish to vote for retaining the USSR as a renewed federation of equal and sovereign republics, considers Bobylev, chairman of the Vilnius Constituency Commission.

At the same time, regular threats are being heard on the part of the Lithuanian legislature and the media, which is reflecting its position. Everything is being undertaken to ruin the referendum in the republic.

Commenting on the decision of the USSR Supreme Soviet to carry out the all-Union referendum on 17 March, Landsbergis stated that this was a crude and unacceptable intrusion into the internal affairs of Lithuania, an effort to instigate real or imaginary disorder, and to destabilize the political situation. On the other hand, underlined Landsbergis, the issue that is being put forward at the Soviet referendum is so absurd that no one should pay attention to its content. The question that is put forward—do you wish to retain what does not exist now but what may exist in the future—is a typical relic of Communist mythology. The vote in Lithuania would only show how many people there are in Lithuania who still blindly believe the nightingales from the CPSU.

Motieka, Landsbergis' deputy, said that if this is carried out in the self-governing areas where the CPSU has a majority, then I would like to warn them that this will be considered as an anti-state activity. The Lithuanian Supreme Council, Motieka continued, will not stay on the sidelines and will assess the actions of such self-governing areas. Measures of administrative rule will have to be brought against them. He also warned the managers of Union enterprises that he will consider their actions as traitorous toward Lithuania, and conclusions will be made regarding them.

The explosion at the building of the Oktyabrskiy and the Sovetskiy rayon party committees in Vilnius, which house the constituency referendum comission, clearly confirms this, the TASS correspondent considers.

Nevertheless, there are all reasons to suppose that the referendum in Lithuania will be carried out in an organized manner, he concluded.

Lithuanian Prosecutor's Office Issues Statement

LD0903163391 Moscow TASS in English 1557 GMT 9 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Kazis Uscila]

[Text] Vilnius March 9 TASS—The Prosecutor-General's Office of Lithuania issued an official statement today which says that "the attendance of Lithuanian residents, if they are summoned by investigating officers of the USSR Public Prosecutor's Office who are investigating the tragic developments in Vilnius, is not compulsory."

Both a group of workers of the USSR Public Prosecutor's Office and investigating officers from the Criminal

Investigation Department of the Procurator-General's Office of the Lithuanian Republic are investigating the tragic developments that took place in the Lithuanian capital last January. Both groups voiced their intention to cooperate closely and help each other.

Arturas Paulauskas, prosecutor-general of the Lithuanian Republic, had a meeting with USSR Prosecutor-General Nikolay Trubin. However, after returning home from Moscow, the Lithuanian prosecutor-general said that the Soviet side had claimed to control the investigation which, according to Paulauskas, is "unacceptable" for the Lithuanian side. "We can only cooperate on the basis of equality and parity," he said in a TV address. He expressed doubt that the "USSR Public Prosecutor's Office will be able to transfer the case to the court after the investigation, because such was the situation with the investigation of developments in Baku and Tbilisi."

Lithuanian Official on KGB Activity in Vilnius

LD0903135191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1105 GMT 9 Mar 91

[From the press review]

[Text] The March of 17 March is the title of an article by Audrius Butkevicius, general director of the country's Defense Department, in LIETUVOS AIDAS.

Audrius Butkevicius states in the conclusion of his article that, under the cover of the annual training of drivers, 300 soldiers of the KGB motorized rifle division have arrived in Vilnius. Their mission is the organization of various provocations. Explosions in Vilnius and Riga, carried out in a very professional manner without casualties and very noisy—this is their work. General Varennikov, who once again has emerged in Riga, has cynically stated that the situation for presidential rule must be prepared in the Baltic republics. There are enough people to execute this. Let us remember 1,500 KGB students are present here, an airborne assault brigade is stationed in Taurage, and other units are ready to act. [sentence indistinct]

The enemy is hindered by the fact that the processes that started in our republic have also consolidated democractic forces in the Soviet Union. Our fate, too, depends on how they resist the policy of the military, party, and KGB strategists, because the general battle will take place there. We must hurry so that we, not yet having managed to form political and state structures consolidating Lithuania's independence, are not taken by surprise.

Loss of Communications in Lithuania Threatened

LD0803191191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian 1800 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Telegraph and telephone communications between Lithuania and the world could have been interrupted today. According to an account given to an ELIA correspondent by Anatolijus Lomakas, deputy director of the state telegraph and telephone center, Soviet soldiers, who had already willfully established themselves at the telephone and telegraph center, attempted to introduce their own order today.

The Soviet commander demanded that all those employed at the center be issued permits, determined by the military, and that only those with such permits would be allowed past the control and verification station. I firmly replied that we would not comply with their orders and we would not agree to their demands, Anatolijus Lomakas said.

The soldiers had to give in today. But some higher commanders of the Soviet military leadership in Vilnius have promised to come to the center on Monday to implement order.

Should the people who work at the center interrupt their work in protest against the license of the military force, telephone and telegraph communications will be cut off with the Soviet Union and other countries of the world.

Incidentally, the Soviet Armed Forces also utilize the center's services.

Lithuania Issues USSR Occupation Directive

91UN1018C Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 5 Mar 91 First Edition p 3

[Article by Captain Second Rank V. Gromak: "Has the Resistance Already Begun?"]

[Text] On Sunday Lithuanian newspapers published a decree of the republic Supreme Soviet "On the Conduct and Actions of Institutions of Power and Citizens of the Lithuanian Republic in the Event of Active Occupation by the USSR." Here instructions are given on how to conduct oneself "in the event of further aggressive actions on the part of the Soviet Union." In particular, it is prescribed that responsible officials not cooperate with "the occupiers," that Lithuanian citizens should not obey, should resist, and have the right to use all possible means and methods to defend themselves and others.

Judging from everything, this "defense" has already begun. Many journalists are quite familiar with the building in Vilnius where the Oktyabrskiy and Sovetskiy Rayon Committees of the Lithuanian Communist Party are presently located. A year ago the temporary press center of the Lithuanian Communist Party Central Committee was located there. My colleagues had to transmit reports to their editorial offices from one of the rooms on the second floor. Today the windows of this room are knocked out, like those of many other rooms. This is the result of an explosion that occurred in the building the night of Saturday-Sunday, set off by unknown individuals.

No one was injured, fortunately, but there was material damage to the building. Glass flew out of nearby homes as well. An investigation is under way.

Vagnorius Protests to Pavlov, Yazov Over Acts

LD0903234991

[Editorial Report] Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Lithuanian at 2000 GMT on 9 March carries a three-minute report on recent developments in Lithuania.

The announcer begins by describing violent incidents involving Lithuanian citizens and Soviet soldiers. He goes on to say: "Lithuanian Prime Minister Gediminas Vagnorius sent a telegram protesting these incidents to USSR Council of Ministers Chairman Pavlov and USSR Defense Minister Yazov." After an indistinct passage, another announcer then reads the following announcement: "The Sajudis Information Agency announces the renewal of its round-the-clock watch at its Vilnius headquarters. Please note that the telephone numbers are 224896; 224909; and 224881."

Soviet Soldiers Rob, 'Beat' Vilnius 'Passersby'

LD0903110191 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in Luthuanian 1000 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Yesterday's festival, International Women's Day, ended with Soviet soldiers in Vilnius firing automatic weapons into the air and the ground and the soldiers robbing and mocking passersby. At about 0500, three drunken, armed representatives of the USSR Armed Forces organized a witch hunt on the corner of Mindaugas and Basanavicius Streets. Initially, they took 18 rubles from a passerby and beat him. Later they started stopping motor vehicles and forcing people to lie on the ground. The drunken orgy lasted about an hour.

These facts were described today to ELTA correspondent Algimantas Degutis by an official on duty at the Ministry of Internal Affairs. He also reported that the case is being investigated together with representatives of the Vilnius city commandant's office.

Lithuanian Defense Officials Detained, 'Abused'

LD0803224791 Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] At today's briefing, the legislative press representative presented some information concerning other aggressive acts by the [Soviet] military.

Yesterday afternoon in Vilnius, soldiers using two vehicles blocked the road, thereby halting a vehicle belonging to the country's defense department. Its passengers were arrested and taken to the Vilnius military commandant's office, where they were filmed and abused in every manner, although physical violence was not used.

Some time later, the detainees were released. The incident is under investigation.

Kuzmickas Views Nordic Council's Baltic Policy

LD0903044491 Vilnius International Service in English 2300 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Interview with Bronislovas Kuzmickas, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, by an unidentified correspondent; place, date not given—Kuzmickas remarks recorded in Lithuanian with superimposed English translation]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] As reported earlier, representatives of the Baltic states took part in the work of the annual session of the Nordic Council last week in the capacity of special guests. Four of the total five member countries of the Nordic Council—Iceland, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden—are currently the most active Western countries to back the Baltic states' [word indistinct] for independence. Finland, the fifth member state of the Nordic Council, however, pursues a more reserved policy with respect to Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. According to Mr. Bronislovas Kuzmickas, deputy chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, the participation of the Baltic states in the annual session of the Nordic Council was significant not only for us but for the Nordic Council itself, which until now has been known to be a rather closed type of structure, rarely inviting guests to participate in its work. This fact, therefore, is a further indicator of the Scandinavian countries' firm determination to expand contacts with the Baltic states. A wideranging program of cooperation and culture was discussed and endorsed, and the members of the Nordic Council pledged to finance it. Mr. Kuzmickas believes that the standpoint of the Scandinavian countries with regard to the political situation in the Baltic states is very significant indeed, and besides, Mr. Kuzmickas notes with pleasure that several positive developmnts have already been achieved in this area.

[Kuzmickas] The member countries of the Nordic Council appear to be more determined on their general attitudes towards the Baltic states, which are struggling to regain their independence. I would even say that their standpoint is more clearly defined. The Noridic Council reflected a unanimous view in all the discussions we had, stressing it supported the aspirations of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia for independence, since these goals were expressed by their democratically elected parliaments and legitimate governments. A difference of opinions emerged only when debates began on what concrete political steps could be taken by the Scandinavian countries. That is, whether they should renew their diplomatic relations immediately, as in Iceland's case, or whether they should carefully investigate all the subtleties linked with such a move, while simultaneously raising the Baltic question on an international level. At this point I can only stress that the Nordic Council's position and readiness to support our cause is a very serious step towards the international recognition of the Lithuanian state.

[Announcer] But while Iceland and Denmark have on many occasions spoken out in favor of the Baltic states' quest for independence, Finland is known to have made several unfavorable statements in this respect. How, then, is the balance achieved within the framework of the Nordic Council? Once again, Bronislovas Kuzmickas.

[Kuzmickas] During the session of the Nordic Council I did not obseve any principal difference among the member states in their attitudes to the restoration of the Baltic countries' independence. Yet representatives of Finland seemed to be more reserved and abstract in their judgements. From my unofficial contacts with Finnish ministers and parliamentarians, I got the impression that Finland would soon be reviewing its policies in a more favorable light [word indistinct].

[Announcer] While in Copenhagen, Bronislovas Kuzmickas had talks with [the] Icelandic prime minister. What concrete issues were touched upon? We put this question to Mr. Kuzmickas.

[Kuzmickas] It was agreed that Iceland, who has made such a big stride forward in supporting Lithuania, could further provide us with useful assistance. Together with the Icelandic prime minister, we came to the conclusion that Iceland could show the initiative to act as mediator between Lithuania and the Soviet Union, getting them together at the negotiations table. Besides, Iceland could play a key role in raising the Lithuanian question in various European forums, such as the European Council, European Parliament, and so on. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] During the annual session of the Nordic Council, officials of the Baltic states had the chance to meet with Benelux representatives who participated in the council's work in the status of guests. What tangible results were achieved during those talks?

Bronislovas Kuzmickas said they had been invited to take part in the session of the Benelux Interparliamentary Council this coming May. This is the first step towards spanning a bridge between the Benelux countries and the Baltic Council.

And one last question to Bronislovas Kuzmickas, who headed the Lithuanian delegation at this year's session of the Nordic Council. Does Lithuania entertain the hope of eventually becoming a full-time member of the Nordic Council?

[Kuzmickas] Of course, we can speculate such possibilities, but in reality this is a complicated issue. This involves a great deal of work on our part. We must have certain concrete achievements before we can discuss such a plan of action. I'm positively sure that at our present stage of development we simply would not manage to implement most of the projects into practice. I really don't think it would be wise to join the Council if we couldn't function as fully fledged members. However, the programs of cooperation that have been endorsed will certainly help the Baltic Council to reorganize its work. My future vision is a joint body linking the Nordic Council and the Baltic Council into one organization, because this is the direction we are moving towards—the integration of Baltic Sea basin countries. The Scandinavians are already working with this goal in view, and I believe we should bear this strongly in mind in all of our long-term projects.

Lithuania Marks First Independence Anniversary

LD1003102591 Vilnius International Service in English 2300 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Events dedicated to mark the first anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania's independence began in the republic today. At noon a mass of mourning for the victims of [the] independence fight was held in the Church of the Immaculate Conception of St. Mary in Vilnius. After the mass, a procession carrying Lithuanian flags marched to Independence Square, where the parliament building stands. When the rally in Independence Square ended, young people marched to the Antakalnis Cemetery to lay flowers and light candles on the graves of the nation's heroes killed by Soviet military on 13 January. Other places of the January violence—the TV tower and the Radio and TV Center—were also visited. Masses for the victims were also held in other Lithuanian towns.

Lithuanian Law on Workers' Private Capital

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For the Lithuanian Law on Workers' Private Capital published in the 18 December 1990 EKHO LITVY, see the JPRS Report Soviet Union: Economic Affairs, JPRS-UEA-91-012, pages 14-15.

RSFSR

Yeltsin Addresses Democratic Russia Bloc

LD0903153491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1254 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Speech by Russian Federation President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin to a gathering of the Democratic Russia Bloc at the House of Theater in Moscow on 9 March—recorded]

[Text] The democratic movement has drastically transformed and, of course, it had not been, I would say, a comfortable year for every one of us who took part in this movement. Nevertheless, after the successful, I would say, elections, after democrats came to many soviets, an atmosphere of euphoria took place—precisely on the part of the democrats. This euphoria played its sad role in the further development of this movement, in the further work of the democrats, including their work in the soviets. It is right to say that many democrats were, in the first place, not ready for work, practical work in the soviets—this is one thing.

Second, the democrats did not win in all the oblasts, cities and towns of Russia—this is the second thing.

Third, you should not forget that many came to the soviets, were elected as deputies using the slogans of the democrats but they were actually, on the inside, traitors of democracy. It was later on that they revealed their insides. But they took on board all of our program. With this program they went to the voters, they used this program when they spoke to the votes and campaigned for this program. They pledged, so to speak, that they would implement this program. Some time elapsed and they totally rejected the program. They became not just neutralists, but they became enemies.

Yes, we did make some tactical mistakes, including also me, personally. Gorbachev lulled us with the 500 days program, pretending that it was a mutual program. He has managed to lull not only me but also such a wolf as Shatalin. [laughter from audience]

He did indeed tell us that the resulting program was an interesting and constructive one. Let us fight jointly for it. We believed him. In October we believed this and we should not have done so. After all, we already knew that he is constantly misleading both the people and, especially, democrats and demcoracy. We knew this. But we believed him because we saw an impasse, because we saw that this program could not be implemented in Russia alone. It could only be implemented throughout the entire country. We agreed to this alliance, especially as, let us recall this, you also were calling for a compromise when we met in October last year. Sit down together with Gorbachev, then we will gain. No, that was a mistake. I agree with speakers here that we have lost four months.

We lost, and it was only on 19 February that finally I summoned up the courage to say that I had disassociated myself from Gorbachev's policies. An extremely fierce offensive has been in progress for a long time, in various forums, including the mass media. No methods are spurned. Persecution, slander, and dirt are again being hurled in ever greater quantities, with every passing day, at us. We grin and brush ourselves off, and so on.

More dirt is to be expected. It is time for us to go onto the offensive. Democracy is in danger! [applause] This is what the miners call on us to do. For them it is much more difficult than for everyone to be seated here in the hall. They have a practical understanding of what is going on. They are doing what now needs to be done. They are acting in a practical way. Pressure is being applied to them. The media are also beginning to print all sorts of insinuations about them. The Karagandaugol association and its management have sunk so low—the news is in today's papers—as to take the striking miners to court and to claim 9 million rubles in damages from them. That is what the leadership of the party and the country have resorted to. The time has come to create a powerful, organized party out of democratic forces, the democratic movement, and Democratic Russia. [applause]

For a long time I was not convinced that it was necessary to do this, but since we have seen how the CPSU is organizing itself before our eyes, we have to realize that they are marching in an organized front. I agree, they are going down to each farm, to each person. As he arrives there, the representative or secretary of the rayon, city, or oblast party says just one word: Ah, you want to be a day laborer for a landowner again, do you? In that case, you go and vote for the presidency, for Yeltsin, for a renewed Russia, and so on.

That's it and he leaves. He needs no more subsidies. Subsidies vote against private ownership. Therefore, it is evidently only now that a movement has been organized, and having these organized forces and powers precisely in the localities will help us nevertheless at perhaps the most decisive moment, and March and this year in general will be decisive. Either democracy will be extinguished or we will not only stick it out with democracy, but we will also vanquish without failing in this sense.

We are blamed for the disentegration of the Union. Who caused the disintegration of the Union? Who pushed all of the republics away? The Democrats, the Russian legislature, its leadership, the Russian Government? The president pushed all of the republics out of the Union by his policies. [applause]

We do not need the Union in the form in which it exists now. We do not need a center which is so huge and bureacratic. We do not need ministries, we do not need this bureaucratic and large-scale machine that already has been harshly dictating everything from above to below for 70 years or more now. We must rid ourselves of it. Perestroyka has been under way for six years so far. People were constantly trying to convince us that we had destroyed this system and that we really were starting to implement democratic transformations—and this turned out to be a lie. We were deceived and we must now open our eyes to the fact that it was a lie and go down another path. Not the one of perestroyka which was in existence, particularly during recent years.

I think that we are accused of being against the Army—that is used everywhere in the media. No! We are not against the Army. We are against the Army being used against the civilian population. Well, we will stand firm here. We will not give way.

Now, the month of March is over saturated politically. I would not argue with those who say that policy is the most important thing, that the economy is not the most important thing. It seems to me, so to speak, that these two very powerful directions should not be torn to pieces. Both policy and the economy are important. The economy will not win without policy and policy will not win without the economy. Well, we probably should stand on these positions and end our program now, as it were.

I should say on the principles of the 500 day program of Shatalin and Yavlinskiy, on 15 March, but just the

Russian program, will be ended on 15 March and there will be the program of the Russian Supreme Soviet.

March is a difficult month. In the first place, there is the referendum. We have to determine our position concerning the Union. That is to say, support for Gorbachev. Moreover, we are publishing the draft of the Union treaty today.

Addressing the Supreme Soviet of the Union again, the president, so to speak, was deceived when he said that nine-tenths of it had been agreed.

Khasbulatov, the leader of the working group, did not sign on the part of Russia. [applause] That is unfair shuffling. That is simply disgraceful. I was in the Federation Council on the 16th, and I came out categorically against the publication of that document. We, Russia, has its own way of discussing that document—in the commission that was set up at the congress there, in the first place. Further, the discussion of that document at the congress on the 28th—a congress that was thrust upon us, but we will discuss that document at it and only after that will we agree to sit at the negotiation table. Not a document that once again attempts to thrust upon us from above, thrust upon us, thrust upon us, [repeats himself] but the Union as we see it. We will be able to sign such a document. Now, they are thinking up all sorts of things! After all, [words indistinct] I did not sign the document. And they are thinking how can we get away from the fact that Yeltsin will not sign the Union treaty? What can we do, well, if he doesn't sign, but so that Russia does?

For that purpose there is the congress, for that purpose there are such tricks as: Let us single out at the Conrgess a group of authorized representatives who are charged with signing the Union treaty. Let the Supreme Soviet or the republic's president sign all the remaining things, but when it comes to things like this—that's life. At present one must expect many tricks like that. You understand, that we in our, I would say—perhaps it is fine- sounding—but we in our candor, nonetheless, still believed that they had a moral policy. There is nothing moral about it. Their policy is without morals.

Why is it that we have several dozen extremely serious comments to make on the draft Union treaty, starting with the heading itself? In today's Constitution we are a sovereign state. So, in the new Union treaty even that has been struck out. It has already become a union of sovereign republics, but there is a great difference between a republic and a state. When at the Council of the Federation, the chairman was asked: What's the matter? Why do we have a transformation like this? You yourself said it would be a union of states and then you went on to reject it. Well, you know, that is practically the same. It depends what people call it: some a republic, some a state. [words indistinct] Then let's talk about a state. Let's leave it as it is. It is not just a matter of a name, but further a principle, the division of property, the division of functions. Comrades, there is a great deal with which we categorically do not agree.

The next thing is that after the referendum, the issue may also be decided at the Congress of whether democracy will be victorious or it will lose. I think that in that case, the whole democratic movement will lose. Therefore, although they reproach us for holding rallies and so forth, either a rally is held, drill-like or to order, or in response to a call from the heart, which is not the same thing. I am prepared for people to unite, to go to the offensive in such a broad front, without hestitation. They would push aside those who wish to remain today such as the first secretary of the oblast committee and the chairman of the oblast soviet; there is simply 16 March, and on 16 March cases will be instituted against each one of them. They don't believe all that. Well then. This time it will really happen.

I am in favor of the president being elected by the whole nation. I said that before the election. But I am in favor even now of a power structure that is reinforced by the people in some way. Then, all the chairmen of the soviets are elected by the whole people. That will mean a strong executive and legislative, power on a local level. We will know through whom we should act. At present one can rely on one soviet because [word indistinct] is going on and priviatization is going on there and the process of allocating land to peasant holdings is taking place. Already 1,500 farm holdings have been set up in Volgograd Oblast—1,500 have been set up. All this has taken place because they have such an able soviet.

Immediately after the elections of the president by a direct ballot have taken place, elections of the chairmen of the soviets by a direct ballot, of the same kind, should be announced. [applause]

I agree that time has been lost regarding the transfer of land. No! Though we have only a month at our disposal we should make use of this month. We must make use of it. Does a law on agriculture exist? Yes. Does a law on ownership exist? Yes. Does a law on land and the reform of land exist? Yes. If we need another document regulating who should transfer the land—I understand that this is the issue which should be resolved: who must transfer the land and to whom?—we will decide this issue precisely on Monday or Tuesday by a joint decision of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and Presidium of the RSFSR Council of Ministers and we will decide on the time of allocating a garden, an allotment, a holding, a farm holding to those who wish to acquire one during March and April. We will also decide on who will be held responsible if someone sabotages this. [applause]

The main thing that should be defined in the document is that an act on the use of land does exist. It should be defined that the acts on the use of land that have been issued are to be considered as invalid by a certain deadline and that they should be re- registered. Once again a call should go out to all the democratic forces to unite within the framework of our mutual front and, of course, then we should go forward toward victory. Thank you.

TASS Reports Address

LD0903152891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1502 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow 9 March (TASS)—Boris Yeltsin, head of the Russian Federation's Supreme Soviet, today leveled criticism at a number of provisions in the draft Union treaty. Addressing the participants in the All-Russian Assembly of Representatives of Russia's Democratic Forces, sponsored by the "Democratic Russia" movement, Boris Yeltsin accused the Union center of attempting to politically "neutralize" the leader of the Russian legislature. He emphasized that 1991 is a "decisive" year for the future of Russia's democratic movement, which must triumph "at all costs". Otherwise, in the speaker's opinion, the country will be thrown backwards.

The participants in the meeting called on their supporters to take part in the demonstrations planned for tomorrow in Russia to support Boris Yeltsin. The chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet said that he himself would not be taking part in the rally scheduled for 10 March on Stolichnaya Square near the Kremlin.

Further on Yeltsin Remarks

LD0903123991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1102 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] A meeting of representatives of the political forces that have amalgamated to form the Democratic Russia bloc has taken place in the Central House of Theater in Moscow. Our correspondent Sergey Melanchikov was there. Over to him now.

[Melanchikov] Good afternoon, the meeting has just ended, and its main aim was to coordinate the actions of all parties, movements and tendencies in the sociopolitical conditions that have arisen. In all the speeches, the main idea that came through was precisely that of unity. As Stanislav Shatalin said, if we do not unite, we shall be stifled one by one.

Opening the assembly, Yuriy Afanasyev said that all the democratic forces must find their line. The Gorbachev-Yelstin conflict was not just a conflict between the two leaders, but a conflict between two large forces. The future of both Russia and the country depended on who triumphed.

One other thing, perhaps, that I noticed. Questions relating to the economy, as well as political issues, were raised in many speeches. According to many economists, for example, Nikolay Shmelev, Yuriy Chernichenko, Vasiliy (?Selenin) and Stanislav Shatalin, the democrats' trouble is that they are confronted by the old system of values, and they can't do anything, since any decision of theirs is simply blocked by the apparat. The main thing now is to escape from limbo and to show people, ordinary people in the street, who no longer believe in anyone at all, that democratic councils can work.

Many people's deputies spoke at the meeting, and the main speech, perhaps, was the one delivered by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, which we shall try to broadcast in the next hour or hour and a half.

Radio Rossii Report Criticized

LD1003223191

[Editorial Report] Moscow Domestic Service in Russian at 1617 GMT on 10 March carries a 22-minute discussion by USSR Supreme Soviet Deputies Yevgeniy Yevgenyevich Kim, Emiliya Andreyevna Panchenko, and Veniamin Aleksandrovich Yarin of the speech given by Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet, at the House of the Theater in Moscow on 9 March.

Kim opens by noting that he was surprised on reading the full text of Yeltsin's speech to see what was omitted in the Radio Rossii version. He says: "A very important passage was omitted concerning his attitude to procuracy employees; specifically, for example, his statement to the effect that the Russian procurator is now ours: He used not to be ours but now he is ours, he said. Or say, the passage about the plenipotentiary representatives of the chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet in local areas, and a whole series of other parts. I believe that it is precisely these aspects that we must explain to our listeners because when they are unaware of these omitted passages they cannot have a correct idea of the essence of the speech."

Panchenko then expresses her concern about the kind of terminology used in the speech, words such as enemies, traitors, lies, and attack, which do not, she says, tie in with the concept of a democrat. She defends the right of the six Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic deputies to express their differences with Yeltsin.

Yarin states that Radio Rossii gave a false impression of the speech. He goes on to criticize Yeltsin's assertion that he has appointed representatives in local areas "who will pursue our policy," and asks: "Where is the multiparty system, where is the pluralism of views, where are those beginnings of a law-governed state about which you, too, have spoken so much in your time? Democracy has won, then it is Yeltsin who has won." he asks: "If this is democracy, what kind of democracy is it today? The democracy of loutishness, turning into political banditry: Democracy belonging only to the ultranationalism which is today killing children—a pass in Ossetia has been opened up and dead children are now being discovered there. Is that democracy? When you read this speech it is indeed dictatorship that lies ahead. The dictator is ready. I want to say: People, be vigilant."

Kim says that the procurator should defend the law, above all. He then speaks about the Union treaty and defends the plan to publish the draft, which Yeltsin has opposed. He notes the people's right to see what is under discussion. "How is it that we speak about democracy, pluralism, and glasnost and are attempting to hide from the people a document that is of fateful significance?" He asks. He believes this is a dangerous trend and not conducive to consolidation. He notes that the calls for the resignation of Gorbachev and the USSR Supreme Soviet and for the dissolution of the existing network of local soviets are "in effect a call for a change in the foundations of the constitutional system in the Soviet Union."

The three deputies continue their discussion of the intolerant nature of the speech, and appeal for tolerance toward people with different views, especially in the context of the forthcoming referendum on the future of the country. Yarin concludes by saying: "In my view, Boris Nikolayevich is aware today that even among his entourage people are tired of the methods with which he is attempting to Lead Russia." Kim concludes by stating that by his actions Yeltsin has shown that "he wants to lead a bloc of anti-communist and anti-socialist forces." Panchenko says that in her view the speech was essentially a step by Yeltsin to try to increase his rating.

Groups Demonstrate Support for Yeltsin Nationwide

Roundup Details Rallies

LD1103010691 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1230 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Roundup by announcer Yevgeniya Kondratyeva of various demonstrations held throughout the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic on 10 March in support of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's policies]

[Excerpts] [Kondratyeva] Throughout Russia today, demonstrations [manifestatsii] are being held in support of the government of our Republic. We will carry reports form various towns, but now I report that several minutes ago a listener from Saratov rang. Her name is Svetlana Zherebtsova. Ten thousand townspeople gathered today in the very center of the town on Revolution Square, Svetlana Zherebtsova reports. The participants in the meeting approved a resolution in support of the Russian Supreme Soviet and its chairman. The main slogan of the meeting was: "No to the Union referendum, yes to the Russian one!" Everything went, according to Svetlana, fairly calmly, with the militia doing nothing to remind people of their presence.

From Minsk comes a report that today at the Friendship Monument, where the borders of Belorussia, Russia, and the Ukraine meet, there was an internationalist meeting of representatives of labor collectives, intelligentsia, servicemen, and war and labor veterans of the three republics. Banners carried in three languages—Russian, Ukrainian, and Belorussian—the words: Eternally together. Unity of the USSR—Yes! [passage omitted]

The participants in te meeting adopted an appeal to the people of the Soviet Union calling on them to keep calm and not to give way to emotion and the intrigues of those who try to split the Union. [passage omitted]

A meeting in support of the Russian Government and Boris Yeltsin was held today in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy. A resolution adopted by its participants supports the course of the leadership of Russia led by Boris Yeltsin. The document says, in particular: We completely share the political declaration made by Yeltsin on central television, including the demand for the resignation of the president and government of the USSR. We express our confidence in the government of Russia. We demand an end to the campaign unleashed by the leadership of the union against the Russian parliament aimed at the overthrow of legitimate people's power in the republic. We demand the recall of the deputies taking part in this. That is the opinion of the participants in the meeting in Petrovpavlovsk-Kamchatskiy.

Now I offer you a report from Tyumen, recorded by phone. At the microphone is Vladimir Yefimov:

[Yefimov] The democratic forces of the town held a meeting last Sunday, 3 March. Just a week ago, at the meeting, thousands of Tyumen people expressed their attitude to the forcible imposition of the socialist option and communist perspectives on the people of the country. Just a week ago, they declared their resolute no to a renewed Union. [passage omitted]

As for today's events, this morning streams of Tyumen people met on their route democrats standing under the Russian flag. The appeal of the town organization of Democratic Russia read: Communists of Russia are plotting the last decisive battle against the destined Russian leader Boris Yeltsin, against the hopes of the people of Russia for real change in our life. We say our resolute no. Hands off Yeltsin. [passage omitted]

In addition, today in Surgut, at the demand of radical deputies, an emergency session of the town soviet was planned. One question was on the agenda: discussion of the position of the group of Communists of Russia. But out of 182, only 117 deputies of the town soviet turned up, and the session did not take place—but 76 deputies signed an appeal to the emergency congress in support of the position of Boris Yeltsin. [passage omitted]

[Kondratyeva] [passage omitted] I would like to offer you another report, this time from our correspondent Marina Loboda in Vladivostok:

[Loboda] It is not the main event of today, but at 1100, at the kray House of Officers, there began a meeting between Svetlana Petrovna Goryacheva, people's deputy of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR], deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, and war and labor veterans and servicemen in the Soviet Army. It began with a long statement by the Navy staff spokesman on the crisis in Russia that the present leadership had brought it to. [passage omitted] In the same tone was the speech by Svetlana Petrovna herself, which was more like a prosecution indictment, with the same Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin as the chief defendant. At this time, on Vladivostok's main square, a meeting of many thousands chanted: Yeltsin, Yeltsin, Yeltsin! About 5,000 people came to the town's main square—and believe me, that is very many for our town. [passage omitted]

Moscow Radio on Demonstrations

LD1003123391 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1200 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Demonstrations and rallies began at precisely noon local time in Moscow, Leningrad, Tomsk, Penza, Vladimir, and other cities of the Russian Federation. They are being held a week before the all-Union referendum, which is to determine the fate of the country.

As is known, the idea of the referendum and the draft of the Union treaty which has been punblished in the press have been far from unequivocally received.

The slogans of today's rallies and demonstrations are "the Democratization of life", "Economic Reforms!" "Sovereignty", and "Human rights".

Rallies Oppose Union Treaty

LD1003135491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1326 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow, 10 Mar (TASS)—Rallies and demonstrations in support of Boris Yeltsin, head of the Russian legislature, and against the Union referendum have been held in various towns of the Russian Federation, TASS correspondents report.

Inhabitants of the city on the Neva have gathered in the very center of Leningrad—on Palace Square. Nikolay Ivanov and Galina Starovoytova, USSR people's deputies; Marina Salye, Russian people's deputy; and representatives of the town bodies of authority spoke to them. Signatures were collected demanding the holding of a referendum on the nationalization of CPSU property.

"Yes to Yeltsin! No to Gorbachev!" was the slogan of a meeting attended by several thousand people in Sverdlovsk, the very important industrial center in the southern Urals region. A meeting in Irkutsk passed a resolution calling on Siberians to say "no" to the preservation of the USSR at the referendum on 17 March. In a number of speeches calls were made for a compromise between the central leadership and the Russian leadership. The holding of a two-hour political strike on 28 March, the opening day of the third extraordinary congress of Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] people's deputies, was discussed at a demonstration in Novosirbirsk.

Meetings were also held in Kazan, Syktyvkar, Ulan-Ude, Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, Omsk, and a number of other towns. They were attended by USSR and RSFSR people's deputies and representatives of a number of new political parties that support the "Democratic Russia" movement.

Supporters Meet in Tomsk

LD1003144291

[Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Russii Network in Russian at 1100 GMT on 10 March carries a 3.5-minute report by (Andrey Pelsh) on a meeting in Tomsk today held under the political slogan "For Russia, for independence, for democracy." (Pelsh) notes that it is not just politics that has brought the people of Tomsk here. Above all, it is the worsening of the economic situation. On 1 March fares rose in Tomsk and the cost of both domestic and municipal services were increased 2.5 times. There is not enough food in the shops of Tomsk. Butter is being rationed: 20 grams per person. From a truck which has been turned into an improvised platform, various demands and slogans are being put forward: "Gorbachev - no, Yeltsin - yes!", "(?End) the genocide of the CPSU!", "Gorbachev won't pass!", "We are for the union which Yeltsin is creating!"

'Hundreds of Thousands' in Moscow

LD1003200791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent V. Stefanov from the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] In Moscow on Manezhnaya Square, there has been a rally of supporters of the Democratic Russia movement. Muscovites turned up there at the call of the movement's leaders to express their attitude toward the Union referendum and the forthcoming price rises, and yet again to support the position of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet.

[Stefanov] One of the speakers started his address to the rally with an attack on the "Vremya" program, alleging that the television will again say this evening that a handful of extremists gathered in Manezh Square. So let me hasten to say that it was indeed not a handful, but hundreds of thousands who gathered in Manezhnaya Square. No, I have not the least intention of describing all those at the rally on this spring day as extremists. The sad thing about such rallies, however, is that the extremism of a handful quickly develops into the extremism of the crowd, and this is very worrying, especially when in the monolithic boom of a choir thousands strong, you suddenly catch the contrapuntal theme, not loud as yet, but perfectly clear: Shoot! Hang!

(?Heavens!) For what? For the sake of what ideals and values? and for whom? From the rostrum the democrats speak, apparently, about democracy, showing concern, apparently, for the wellbeing of the people, and speak, apparently, sincerely.

[Begin recording] [Travkin, leader of the Democratic Party of Russia] Let us [words indistinct] [loud cheering]. This no will not be [words indistinct]. It will be no to their continuing to (?make fools of us) [passage indistinct] [end recording]

[Stefanov] Surely we will not again permit ourselves, very different though we may be in our ideals, beliefs, and convictions, to be divided into us and them, into our people and the others, people irreconcilably confronting each other? Surely we are not going to grab each other by the forelock and fight? Is it worth it?

I listened attentively to speeches at the rostrum, genuinely wanting to contain in my report constructive proposals from the rally. But the word no hung over everything. No to the president and government; no to the current Congress of People's Deputies of the country; no to the question of the referendum. Very well, let's destroy everything, and then what? Will that make our life any more rational and dignified, indeed any fuller? No answer to that question, not even the question itself, was voiced at the rally. yet hundreds of thousands had gathered in Manezh Square.

Rallies in Tolyatti, Invanovo

LD1003224991 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2050 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Three rallies were held today in the town of Tolyatti. One of them was held early in the morning by the town's Communists; the other two were organized by the Movement of Democratic Russia and were held simultaneously in two rayons. The rally of Communists, in spite of being increased by two companies of cadets, was small and made up chiefly of veterans. The Communists favored the preservation of the USSR in the formula of the Union referendum. One of the democratic rallies began with a procession through the town's streets under tricolor flags and slogans. The procession was short, but the militia had to stop traffic on the streets for it. The democratic rallies passed a resolution in support of Yeltsin and called on the town's residents to vote against the formula of the Union referendum and for the introduction of a Russian presidency. Telegrams were adopted and sent containing demands for Gorbachev's and Kravchenko's resignations. Russian and local democratic papers were on sale at the rally. Signatures were collected for recalling Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Deputy General Tarasov, and also signatures in support of Yeltsin's stance.

The rally voiced a protest to the VAZ [Volga Automobile Factory] administration, and against the threat of repressions against participants and organizers of the strike held at VAZ at the end of February. [passage omitted]

Ivanovo is not a very politicized town, and is perhaps one of the hungriest towns in the country, but this topic of the problem with foodstuffs and with goods was hardly raised at a meeting. People spoke, first and foremost about politics. They spoke about the upcoming referendum, about the confrontation between Russia and the center. The slogans at this rally unanimously supported both Yeltsin and the policy which the Russian legislature is pursuing under his leadership. [passage omitted]

Let me add that a resolution was passed at the rally in Ivanovo in which the Rally's participants came out in support of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic referendum, in support of its formula, and appealed to everyone to vote against the Union formula to be written in the USSR referendum ballot papers. They also voiced support for Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, the policy being pursued by the Russian legislature under his leadership, and called for the resignation of Gorbachev and the USSR Cabinet of Ministers.

We have received so much material that we have, unfortunately, been unable to put it all on the air today. Many thanks to journalists from Yaroslavl, Donetsk, Kazan, Perm, and Stavropol for the reports they have sent. They will be broadcast on Radio Rossii tomorrow. Also tomorrow, at the request of our listeners, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's speech at the meeting on Saturday at Moscow's cinema house will once again be broadcast.

Rally in Ossetia's Vladikavkaz

LD1003233391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1908 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Report by correspondent Aleksandr Aleshkin from Vladikavkaz]

[Text] I have just returned from Theater Square in Vladikavkaz. This is the square outside the Ossetian national drama theater. Of late it has become the place where meetings are held, devoted to the most vital issues of our troubled and difficult lives. Today a townwide rally in support of Boris Yeltsin and in support of the decision of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet to hold a Russian Federation referendum was held here.

A week ago, as is well known, the Supreme Soviet of North Ossetia, alone among all of Russia's republics, adopted a resolution at an extraordinary session on boycotting the Russian referendum. At the session, this resolution was passed by an overwhelming majority—109 deputies voted for it and only eight against. But outside the walls of the Supreme Soviet, in the towns and villages of the republic, the attitude to the boycott is different. I do not think I am mistaken if I say that the majority of the population, both the inidigenous Ossetians, the Russians, and representatives of other nationalities, condemn this decision by the republic's parliament.

The decision to hold the rally was adopted by the Progressive Democratic Party of North Ossetia at a session of the Coordinating Council. But the city soviet did not give permission to hold it. What is more, the refusal was broadcast on local television yesterday. However, despite the ban, and regardless of the damp weather, people gathered on Theater Square at noon. In their hands the participants in the rally carried slogans: Unity is our strength; We demand immediate steps toward a solution in South Ossetia; Gorbachev, Gamsakhurdia—history will not forgive you; Criminal prosecution for the guilty men in the tragedy of South Ossetia; and finally, Yeltsin is the thorn in the flesh of the CPSU.

The presence of slogans about South Ossetia is understandable—it is a painful moment for all Ossetians. The 13,000 refugees from Tskhinvali are an open wound, one which bleeds largely because of the center's lack of action, and its inability to take the situation in hand and end the bloodshed beyond the Causcasus mountains. Speaking in harsh and what might be called unparliamentary expressions, they also criticized the Party and state leadership of North Ossetia, which follows in the wake of the Union government, and to the detriment of its own population is heading for confrontation with Russia, its legislature, and Yeltsin. They unambiguously defined as anti-people the decision by the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic to boycott the Russian referendum.

The participants in the rally called on their fellow countrymen to say no to the Union referendum. Meanwhile they stressed: We are not against the Union in general; we are against the Union model of Gorbachev and his team. They called upon their countrymen to say yes to the referendum on Russia, and thus to confirm their adherence to the choice made more than two centuries ago by the spiritual fathers of the Ossetian people, who concluded an alliance with Russia and with the Russian people.

Tsipko Comments on Yeltsin, Democrats' Strategy

91UN0987A Madrid EL PAIS in Spanish
22 Feb 91 p 17

[Commentary by Aleksandr Tsipko, assistant director of the Moscow Institute of International Economic Relations: "No Way Out"]

[Text] One of the main advisers of Boris Yeltsin, a strong supporter of the Russian Federation's present-day sovereignty, telephoned me yesterday to ask me for help. He complained of a lack of ideas and that he had been unable to propose anything new to Yeltsin.

The fact that Yeltsin's people were asking advice from me, a constant critic of the Russian Federation's strategy of confrontation with Gorbachev, says a great deal by itself. There are, at the very least, reasons to assume that the tactics of Yeltsin and the radical democrats who support them are in crisis. It has been shown that the power achieved by the democrats in the Parliaments of specific Soviet republics does not automatically bolster their power in the country, nor does it improve their chances of toppling Gorbachev, whom they now regard as a conservative.

Yeltsin has no chance of replacing Gorbachev, even though Yeltsin's authority in the country, especially in Russia, is now considerably greater than Gorbachev's. Therefore, Western diplomats seem a bit naive when they ask whether now is the time to put their money on Yeltsin. There is no direct step from the level on which Yeltsin is now playing his political game to the higher level of power where Gorbachev sits. This is the inevitable result of the entire strategy of achieving democracy and of "building capitalism in a single socialist republic."

In my opinion, a Yeltsin defeat in the Soviet Parliament in a direct showdown with Gorbachev for the post of president would have given Yeltsin better political prospects than his victory over Ivan Polozkov, the head of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, in the Parliament of this republic. People would have been aware of and remembered this precedent of a direct, clean confrontation between Gorbachev and Yeltsin for power in the country within the framework of Soviet legal structures. Who knows whether the logic of events would again direct Gorbachev's attention to Yeltsin's candidacy.

A year ago, when Gorbachev requested the post of president, our democrats, headed by Yeltsin, decided to play it cool and forgo what they considered to be a hopeless competition with him.

Instead of battling for power directly with Gorbachev, they decided to undermine the Soviet central power, to deprive it of the meaning and the importance that it had had until then, all the more so since the Soviet Constitution provided for the possibility of events unfolding this way. Like all of the constitutions of totalitarian states, the Constitution contained some statements about freedom that no genuine democracy could allow itself. It could never have occurred to Stalin and Brezhnev that independent nationalist movements would appear in our country to demand independence for their peoples. It could not have occurred to them that someone would ever take seriously the propaganda myth that the Russian Federation is independent of the Kremlin and that like the other Soviet republics, it is entitled to its own independent government bodies. Therefore, they retained in the Soviet Constitution the Leninist myths about the self-determination of all peoples, up to and including secession, and the assertion that the Russian Federation, that is to say, the original Russia, is a republic, like Moldavia or Georgia. No one could have imagined that the Moscow of the Russian Federation would attempt to secure independence from the Soviet Moscow, or that Russia would attempt to achieve independence from the authentic Russia, which is called the USSR today.

The democrats decided to play the game of democracy that the old communist constitution offered them. They began to call for major, real power for the Russian Federation, independent of the Kremlin; they began to call for state sovereignty for each republic on the basis of the constitution. For an entire year there was a campaign in which not only the Baltic States that Stalin had annexed, but also the Ukraine, Belorussia, Georgia, and Tatarstan declared their state sovereignty and the primacy of their laws over those of the USSR. They did all of this in the hope that if the republics became the owners of their territories, there would be no territory left over which Gorbachev and the center could exercise power. They assumed that the greater the territory of the republic, the more important its president would be and, consequently, the greater his influence in the country would be. But this quantitative logic presupposed that by becoming the president of the Russian Federation, that is to say, one-seventh of the country, Yeltsin would become more important than Gorbachev, whose power would thus be restricted to the territory of the Kremlin. The democratic press has written a great deal about this in recent years. After the Russian Federation declared its sovereignty, they said that the Union would no longer exist, and Gorbachev and Rizhkov could be dispensed with. However, this was a typical self-deception in an effort to avoid facing an unpleasant fact for the sake of peace of mind and short-lived happiness.

As long as the army, the police, and the KGB retain power, and as long the central ministries and the military-industrial complex maintain power, the sovereignty of the republics will be a myth. Of course, the power of the democrats in the Parliaments of certain republics, especially the Russian Federation, is of great moral importance, inasmuch as it will enable them to contain the conservatives' current offensive. Yet this power by itself cannot change anything in the center, nor can it influence the president's policies, law-and-order policy, or the ministries. The time has now come when Gorbachev will be using our Constitution's democratic window-dressing for his own purposes. If the cities and republics wanted power, now they have it (Gorbachev seems to be saying). But now that you have devoted yourselves to municipal and civic politics, do not meddle in matters that are of no concern to you, do not touch the issues that fall under my State jurisdictions.

No one knows what will happen in our country tomorrow. A standoff has arisen after the tragic events in the Baltics.

The advocates of dictatorship, especially the military, have dared not go all the way and begin cracking down on the democratic Governments in the republics. Thus, it is no accident that Gorbachev emerged from his state of shock to condemn the actions of the military in the Baltics. Do not forget that two weeks before he had justified them.

But the democrats today are in no position to gain anything with their parade of sovereignties and their war of laws. As long as Gorbachev is president of the country, he will always win. Perhaps he will show restraint towards the Baltics, but he will surely never allow Yeltsin to create his own armed forces or his own State Security Committee. The democrats cannot expect significant support in society. Practically no one supported their most recent call for a general strike.

It is clear, then, what I could suggest to the Yeltsin adviser who asked me for help. The democrats must unite once and for all and not split up again in national compartments, at least until they are ultimately victorious. It is impossible for the peoples of our country to climb alone out of the hole of their nonexistence. Freedom and national independence can arise only in a sound, democratic state. They must change tactics and take the adversary more seriously. They will not be successful without an earnest and, no doubt, lengthy and self-sacrificing struggle to put the central organs of government on a sound footing, to democratize the entire country. The time has come to fight for fresh general parliamentary elections. What is most important, the time has come to fight in earnest for the people, to expand and bolster organizationally the social base for democratic change.

Rally Supports Call for Gorbachev's Resignation

LD1003163291

[Editorial Report] Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1350 GMT on 10 March carries a two-minute report from correspondent (Andrey Belonoshko) on a rally organized by the Democratic Russia movement in Volgograd today "in defense of the sovereignty of Russia, in defense of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, and also dedicated to the forthcoming all-Union referendum. According to preliminary estimates, more than 10,000 people, who had come here from all over the city, assembled at the rally."

(Belonoshko) continues: "People came with slogans calling for the unification of all democratic forces in the struggle against dictatorship, party autocracy [partokratiya], and violence." He adds that those who spoke at the rally said that "they pin their hopes for the futue solely on the Government of Russia and on Yeltsin, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Supreme Soviet. Almost all of them noted that the question of the Union referendum had not been formulated properly.

"During the rally, Democratic Russia materials were distributed and signatures and contributions were gathered in support of the striking miners," (Belonoshko) says. "The participants in the rally adopted an appeal to all miners' collectives in Vorkuta, Kuzbass, and the Donetsk coal basin. The appeal expresses complete solidarity with the political demands of the miners for the resignation of the president of the USSR and his government, for the disbandment of the USSR Supreme Soviet, and for the voluntary union of sovereign republics on democratic principles," (Belonoshko) states.

He concludes: "The citizens of Volgograd who assembled at the all-Russian rally unanimously declared their support for Russian sovereignty, for Yeltsin, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, and for democratic deputies in the Supreme Soviet of Russia. The full text of the resolution has been handed over to representatives of oblasts newspapers, radio, and television."

'Democratic Russia' Bloc Adopts Charter

LD0903220191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 2050 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] A meeting of representatives of the political forces that have amalgamated to form the Democratic Russia bloc took place today in the central House of the Theater in Moscow. The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate the activities of different parties and movements in the situation that has developed. Boris Yeltsin, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, spoke at the meeting and called on the democrats to combine their efforts and go over to the offensive. Gavriil Popov, Yuriy Afanasyev, Yuriy Chernichenko, and Nikolay Shmelev, as well as leaders of various political groups also took part in the gathering.

A charter of the democratic forces was adopted at the meeting. The charter declares the main aim of the democratic forces to be the creation of a prosperous democratic Russia.

20,000 Ryazan Residents Support Preserving Union

LD1003195491 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 10 Mar 91

[From the "Vremya" newscast]

[Text] Those participating in a meeting in Ryazan today on the forthcoming all-Union referendum spoke in favor of preserving the USSR. Following an appeal by labor collectives, about 20,000 residents of the town gathered, with speakers condemning forces calling for the country to be split.

RSFSR Resolution on Referendum Arrangements

PM0803115691 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 7 Mar 91 Single Edition p 3

[Resolution signed by R.I. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) Supreme Soviet, in Moscow on 4 March: "Resolution of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium on Progress in Fulfilling the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Resolution 'On Arrangements for the 17 March 1991 USSR and RSFSR Referendums'"]

[Text] In accordance with the RSFSR Supreme Soviet resolution "On Arrangements for the 17 March 1991 USSR and RSFSR 17 March 1991 Referendums" extensive work is under way in the republic to prepare for the USSR and RSFSR referendums.

At the same time, some local soviets of people's deputies are attempting to sabotage the organization of the RSFSR referendum, and this is contrary to the RSFSR Constitution and USSR and RSFSR laws, and violates the individual's right to participate in running his country as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international legal documents.

In line with Article 114 of the RSFSR Constitution, the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium resolves:

1. The highest organs of state power and administration of those republics forming part of the RSFSR and local soviets of people's deputies, are to adopt supplementary measures aimed at holding the RSFSR referendum across the entire RSFSR territory. Decisions preventing the holding of the referendum in particular places are unconstitutional and are not binding.

2. In line with Article 39, Point 5 of the RSFSR Law "On Kray and Oblast Soviets of RSFSR People's Deputies," the Smolensk Oblast Soviet of People's Deputies 22 February 1991 decision not to hold the RSFSR referendum is to be repealed, as it is contrary to Articles 2 and 5 of the RSFSR Constitution.

The soviets of peoples deputies must work with the USSR and RSFSR referendum commissions to implement all the necessary measures for holding the RSFSR referendum on this oblast's territory.

3. It is hereby established that in the republics forming part of the RSFSR, autonomous oblasts, krays, and oblasts where the central, republic, or okrug commissions are not carrying out preparatory work for the RSFSR referendum, the rayon, city, city rayon, settlement, and rural soviets of people's deputies are entitled to resolve independently the issue of holding the RSFSR referendum on their territory. Announcements regarding the adoption of any such decision are to be relayed directly to the Central Electoral Commission for the Election of RSFSR People's Deputies, which is acting as the RSFSR Central Commission for Organizing the USSR and RSFSR Referendums.

4. The RSFSR Central Commission for Organizing the USSR and RSFSR Referendums must more closely supervise compliance with the legislation on referendums on the entire RSFSR territory, and inform the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium on 11 March 1991 on the progress of preparations for the USSR and RSFSR referendums.

5. The RSFSR Prosecutor's Office must take the necessary action in those instances where RSFSR legislation pertaining to the RSFSR referendum has been violated.

[Signed] R.I. Khasbulatov, first deputy chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet
Moscow, RSFSR House of Soviets, 4 March 1991

Legislative Observers To Monitor Referendum

PM0803114691 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 7 Mar 91 Single Edition p 3

[Unattributed report: "Observer Status Given"]

[Text] The RSFSR [Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic] Supreme Soviet Presidium has adopted a resolution "On Introducing the Institution of RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium Observers To Monitor the Holding of the USSR and RSFSR Referendums 17 March 1991 on RSFSR Territory." The aim is to give organizational and methodological help to the commissions for holding the USSR and RSFSR referendums 17 March 1991 on RSFSR territory.

The status and rights of official RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium observers to monitor the holding of the USSR and RSFSR referendums 17 March 1991 have been granted to RSFSR people's deputies. They have been recommended to assist the commissions for holding the referendums to carry out the tasks entrusted to them.

In accordance with the RSFSR Law "On the Status of the RSFSR People's Deputy" and Article 4 of the RSFSR Law "On the RSFSR Referendum," the official RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium observers are entrusted with the duties of promoting compliance with legislation on the referendum.

The official RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium observers have been granted the right of access to all the referendum commissions' materials at any point in the commissions' work, and the right to appeal against their decisions to the RSFSR Central Commission for Holding the USSR and RSFSR Referendums.

The Supreme Soviet Presidiums of republics within the RSFSR, kray and oblast soviets, soviets of autonomous oblasts and autonomous okrugs, and city, rayon, settlement, and rural soviets and their presidiums are instructed to provide the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Presidium observers and their representatives with the necessary help in carrying out the tasks entrusted to them.

'Flood' of Refugees Head for North Ossetia

LD0903175991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1625 GMT 9 Mar 91

[By correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 9 Mar (TASS)—The situation in South Ossetia remains tense and explosive as before. As the press center of the extraordinary committee attached to the chairman of the North Ossetia Soviet Socialist Republic Supreme Soviet told the TASS correspondent, shots thundered once again last night in Tskhinvali and its environs. Ossetians defending the town participated in skirmishes with Georgian guerillas. A Georgian was killed in circumstances which are unclear. An investigation is being conducted.

According to North Ossetian Internal Affairs Ministry reports, there is a considerable accumulation of pickets from illegal armed Georgian formations in the villages of Avnevi and Okona, of Znaurskiy Rayon, and in Kekhvi and Tamarasheni, Tskhinvali rayon. In the words of the refugees, they are committing excesses, demanding ransoms, pillaging and driving Ossetian families from their homes and burning household premises. The Ossetian population has been driven out of 22 villages of the oblast.

According to operational data of the republican Internal Affairs Ministry, there is a catastrophic shortage of food, medicines, and fuel in Tskhinvali. No food has been delivered to the town for the past five days due to the fact that two bridges on the bypass road were blown up and that the highways have been blocked. Bread is being delivered to residents by helicopter since the local bakery's supply of flour has dried up. Tens of heavy motor vehicles carrying humanitarian aid which the population of South Ossetia should be receiving from the krays, oblasts, and republics of the northern Caucasus and other regions of the country are standing idle in Dzhava.

There has been abundant snowfall again in the mountains of North Ossetia, near the Transcaucasian Highway, and it has complicated the already difficult life of the flood of refugees from Ossetian villages of Georgia. They are heading to Vladikavkaz and rural rayons of North Ossetia, carrying suitcases and bundles through the Rokskiy pass. According to reports from the headquarters of the extraordinary committee, motor vehicles carrying refugees arrive here every day. There are many sick people and there are frostbite victims among them. The leadership of the republic is adopting urgent measures to accommodate the refugees and to provide them with all they need to live.

Czech Premier Pithart Visits on Trade Cooperation

LD0603120791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Excerpt] The visit to Russia by Petr Pithart, chairman of the Government of the Czech Republic, has begun. It will continue until 8 March. His program includes a conversation with Silayev, chairman of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] Council of Ministers, and Kozyrev, minister of foreign affairs of the republic, and the signing of documents on the results of these meetings. That is for today. Tomorrow, meetings are planned with Pavlov, the USSR prime minister, and Malyshev, deputy chairman of the Russian Council of Ministers. A meeting with Boris Yeltsin and RSFSR people's deputies is also possible. [passage omitted]

Views Economic Problems With Russia

LD0603204391 Prague Domestic Service in Czech 1730 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Czech Prime Minister Petr Pithart commenced a three-day official visit to the Russian Federation today. Immediately after his arrival in Moscow, he met Andrey Kozyrev, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] minister of foreign affairs. Afterwards he had talks with his counterpart Ivan Silayev, the Russian prime minister. This meeting resulted in the signing of a joint Russian-Czech statement. Replying to questions from Czechoslovak journalists, including our permanent correspondent to the Soviet Union, Jan Smihula, on his assessment of today's talks in Moscow, Petr Pithart said:

[Begin Pithart recording] We have started in a very businesslike and down-to-earth manner. We noted that in every respect our mutual relations dropped to the lowest possible point in history, and we voiced regret that this is happening precisely at a time when the prerequisites for truly normal relations are developing. This applies in particular to this year, when the last Soviet soldier is due to leave Czechoslovak territory. It would be very unfortunate, indeed, if our relations were broken off. In our view the obstacles are more or less of a technical nature. Although the general endeavor to trade in dollars is understandable, it is now leading to the halting of all trade transactions and we are looking for mechanisms, banking mechanisms that would make it possible to get over this difficult period. If we do not succeed, then in the Czech Republic, in the ministry of industry alone, it will mean a maximum unemployment of around 400,000 people, which is beyond all jokes. At the same time these people are producing goods which is in enormous demand here. This is all the more the reason for the need to find and ways of [word indistinct] transacting our trade operations. We have already set up a working group. I appointed Mr. Minister Vrba and Mr. Premier Silayev appointed his minister of foreign trade to this group, and we are starting the work immediately. [end recording]

Received by Silayev

LD0603223291 Prague CTK in English 2142 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 6 (CTK)—Czech Premier Petr Pithart met here today with the chairperson of the Russian Federation's Council of Ministers, Ivan Silayev, for talks on trade, scientific research, education and cultural exchanges.

"Czechoslovak-Soviet trade is now in a crisis, but we consider this to be the result of technicalities more than anything else", said Pithart on his arrival earlier today.

In the course of the discussion both officials expressed dissatisfaction with the unjustifiably low level of trade between the two countries and agreed to set up working groups to deal with this situation.

At the end of the meeting this evening a joint declaration was issued, stating that the Czech republic and the Russian Federation agreed on the necessity to create conditions for deepening bilateral cooperation.

The declaration touched on many areas including Czech-Russian contacts at the ministerial and local levels, collaboration in scientific research and investment-seeking, and greater contacts in culture, education, physical fitness and youth activities.

Silayev told journalists after he signed the document that Boris Yeltsin, the president of the Russian parliament, plans to visit Czechoslovakia sometime this year.

Pithart noted how ironic it was that despite both sides' efforts to exchange goods with each other, mutual trade has been brought to a halt.

As a way around this situation, Czech minister of Industry Jan Vrba suggested that the Czech Republic trade with Russia on a goods- for-goods basis, with the balance to be paid in national currencies. Thus while Czechoslovak goods are now valued in dollars, the Soviet Union could make up the difference in roubles, and these could then be used in turn by the Czechoslovak side to purchase products in the USSR, he explained.

All of these issues are to be settled in the near future in negotiations between Czechoslovak Deputy Premier Vaclav Vales and his Soviet counterparts.

Cooperation Statement Signed

LD0703051791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1655 GMT 6 Mar 91

[By correspondents Sergey Ryabkin and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow, 6 Mar (TASS)—During a meeting here today, Ivan Silayev, Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic [RSFSR] prime minister, and CSFR Prime Minister Petr Pithart announced their intention to develop constructive cooperation between the RSFSR and the CSFR in the economic and scientific research spheres. They also plan to cooperate in the areas of culture, education, and sports. Today they signed a joint statement in which it is noted that the two sides will create favorable conditions for supporting close links in various areas.

The document expresses concern at the present "unjustifiably low level of trade between the two countries." In this regard, the two sides agree to create working groups that will develop specific programs. Both republics state that they will support regular contacts at the level of state bodies and will also develop cooperation among cultural, education, and sporting figures and institutions, and also in the sphere of youth exchanges.

Pithart on Visit, Russian Trade

LD0703225791 Prague CTK in English 2158 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] Moscow March 7 (CTK correspondents)—"The main theme of our discussions so far has been how to get around technical barriers standing in the way of mutual trade", Czech Premier Petr Pithart said at the end of two days of meetings here.

The lack of convertible currency on both sides can be compensated for in many cases with new accounting methods, he suggested at a press conference this

One of the outcomes of the last two days of discussions will be the creation of working groups made up of specialists from the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation to deal with these issues in detail.

Czech Industrial Minister Jan Vrba, who has already been named to one of the working groups, told journalists about preparations to establish a Russian-Czech joint venture called "Russian Department Store", which would allow bilateral trade in national currencies. "We will get around the problem of exchange rates by valuing the goods according to world prices", Pithart explained.

In conversations with managers of Russian textile firms, Vrba discovered they had an interest in acquiring more Czechoslovak equipment and spare parts, but no possibility to buy them. Thus one of the first tasks of the Czech-Russian working groups will be to agree on a mechanism of trade between individual firms.

The next task will be to figure out how to exchange goods that are not on either the Czechoslovak or the Soviet Government's lists to be traded, but are already in production based on past long-term agreements.

Also signed today was a protocol on developing trade between the Czech Republic and individual regions of the Russian Federation.

Holds Moscow News Conference

LD0803000791 Moscow World Service in English 2110 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] A news conference took place at the Czechoslovak Embassy in Moscow for Soviet and foreign journalists with the head of the Czech Government, Petr Pithart, who is on an official visit here at the invitation of the Russian Government. This is the first visit of a representative of the Czech Republic to the Soviet Union, the Russian Federation in particular. They have come here to draw attention to the notable decline in all aspects of Soviet-Czechoslovak relations.

If nothing changes in our trade by the end of the year it will amount to merely one-fifth of last year's volume of trade. Trade with the Soviet Union accounts to [as heard] 40 percent of Czechoslovakia's national income. It was explained during the meeting with the Soviet Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov that if definite steps are not taken over 400,000 people will lose their jobs due to the drop in trade. Now they are employed in industries manufacturing machinery and goods under contract with the Soviet Union. It would be dogmatic to apply the principle everything for dollars and through dollars in mutual trade. This will cause losses on both sides.

During the talks we agreed to form a group of experts at the government level to deal with practical problems of developing trade, exchanges of goods between individual companies and regions of the Czech Republic and the Russian Federation. Trade should be conducted at world prices, but with the use of national currencies.

Journalists were familiarized with a joint statement on the results of the visit. the two sides, the document said, have agreed that conditions should be created for deepening cooperation and regular contacts between ministries and local bodies promoted. The two sides pledged to support direct cooperation between cultural institutions and art workers of the two countries, promoting ties in education, sports, and youth exchanges. The document stresses the necessity of observing agreements between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia in line with the acting legislation of the two countries.

Radio Rossii on News Conference

LD0803161491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1304 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Today, 8 March, is the last day of the official visit to Russia of the government delegation of the Czech Republic, led by Czech Prime Minister Petr Pithart. A news conference devoted to the results of the visit was attended by our correspondent Marina Khnutova. Here is her report.

[Khnutova] [passage omitted] I remind you that during the current visit there were meetings and talks between the delegations of the Governments of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and the Czech Republic, in which the sides informed each other of further possibilities for deepening economic and cultural cooperation.

In accordance with the results of the talks, Silayev and Pithart signed a joint statement which expressed, in particular, concern over the unjustifiably low level of trade between our countries in general, and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and the Czech Republic in particular.

Summing up the meetings and conversations with the Russian Government delegation, Petr Pithart highly assessed the importance of the meetings and conversations that had taken place, and the prospects for extending ties in the scientific-technical and production fields, and in the sphere of trade and mutual contacts in the cultural, educational, sport and youth exchange areas.

Answering a question about whether the possibility of effecting barter deals—and of links between the Czech Republic and individual regions in Russia—had been discussed with Mr. Pithart at the meeting with Silayev, the Czech prime minister said:

[Begin Pithart recording in Czech with superimposed Russian translation] We decided that we would not be dogmatic. When there is mutual interest on both sides, we shall agree to exceptions. But, they really will be exceptions that prove the rule. But, the rule indicates that barter deals are not, as it were, a sufficient incentive. As for trade with individual regions, it must be said that it already exists and is being effected. We have an agreement with Tyumen oblast to exchange oil for goods, to the tune of 500,000 tonnes of oil. [end recording]

[Khnutova] I shall note, in conclusion, that the news conference, organized by the CSFR press department in Moscow, aroused great interest among foreign correspondents accredited to the Soviet Union. Representatives of the Voice of America, the British REUTER news agency and others were there. To judge from the questions they asked, they thought it important to clarify the position of the head of the Czech government on mutual relations between the center and the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic.

Pithart Views CSFR-USSR Trade

LD0803124491 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0930 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Today is the last day of the visit to Moscow by Petr Pithart, chairman of the Czech Republic Government. Here is a report by our correspondent Igor Sidorovich.

[Sidorovich] The head of the Czech Government came to the Soviet Union at the invitation of the Russian Federation Government. One must say that direct links and cooperation between Russia and Czechia traditionally developed during the so-called stagnation years, as well as relations between the Ukraine and Slovakia. Nevertheless, in the history of mutual relations between the USSR and Czechoslovakia, this is the first visit to our country by the head of the Czech Government: please do not confuse it with the Czechoslovak one. Although Pithart arrived at the invitation of the Russian Government, talks were held not only with Silayev, head of the Russian Government, but also with Pavlov, head of the Cabinet of Ministers. The current catastrophic situation in trade and cooperation between the USSR and CSFR was the main topic of talks. Here is what Petr Pithart said about this at a news conference at the Czechoslovak embassy in Moscow.

The drive to establish the toughest possible conditions in the economy and to trade at world prices and for hard currency has resulted in our mutual trade almost ceasing to exist. Today the situation is such that, on the one hand, in a month or two, 5 percent of the employees of Czechoslovak industry will be without work. The main reason for this is shortage of Soviet orders. On the other hand, the USSR will receive only one-fifth of goods from Czechoslovakia this year, first of all, equipment and technology which, in many cases, cannot be replaced by foreign equipment. For example, train engines manufactured specifically for broad-tracked Soviet railways. A joint statement by the Russian Federation and Czech Republic Governments on the results of Pithart's visit was adopted. It mapped out the main guidelines for further cooperation between Czechia and Russia. A group of experts has been set up to develop measures for overcoming the crisis situation. Speaking about the joint statement, Petr Pithart stressed that in no way should it be regarded as an attempt at solving problems behind the Union government's back. We were happy to conduct talks at Union and republican levels. We understand perfectly well that there are issues which, for the time being, are fully within the center's competence, for example, barter deals, Petr Pithart noted. We found mutual understanding both with the federation and the Union. Their approaches to solving problems differ, and this is no news to us. These approaches are not mutually exclusive but, rather, they complement each other. We hope that the issue of the powers of the centre and republics will be finally resolved in the USSR. But this does not mean that until then one should sit and wait without signing accords or contracts. One should work under real, not imaginary, conditions, Petr Pithart said. Yet another thing. Czechs are going to cooperate with other Union republics, too. But first, the chairman of the Czech Government said, let us look where we will get with the Russian Federation's Government.

RSFSR, CSFR Finance Ministers Meet

LD0103214891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2115 GMT 28 Feb 91

[Text] Prague, 1 Mar (TASS)—Possibilities for cooperation were discussed at talks which took place on Thursday [28 February] between the finance ministers of the CSFR and the RSFSR—Vaclav Klaus and I. Lazarev. The RSFSR finance minister stated to journalists that during the talks, which were of a constructive nature, there was in the main a broad exchange of information. He expressed the conviction that the meeting was useful for both sides and in the future talks will be more concrete.

V. Klaus noted that at the talks the conviction was rather about communicating Czech experience in implementing economic reform than about resolving concrete questions of facilitating bilateral trade.

Western Republics

Moldova's Snegur Appeals Against Referendum

LD0803155991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1425 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] Kishinev, 8 Mar (TASS)—Mircha Snegur, president of Moldova, has used today's women's holiday to call on women of this republic, as he put it, "to foil Moscow's intention" to hold a referendum on the issue of preserving the USSR.

Moldova's authorities have spoken against holding the all-Union referendum on the republic's territory. But a number of enterprises in the capital, as well as inhabitants of the Dnestr left bank and the southern part of the Republic, where the percentage of non-Moldovans is large, are intending, together with the whole country, to express their attitude towards the future of the Soviet state on 17 March. This is being done in line with the law, passed by the USSR legislature, which allows local authorities, public organizations and individual enterprises, in case of active opposition toward the referendum by a republic's authorities, to hold it independently.

Participants in today's women's rally (true, there were considerably more men there) spoke sharply against holding the referendum on Moldovan territory. Anticommunist slogans were heard, and demands to nationalize the Communist Party of Moldova's property and to create an army of Moldova's own were put forward.

Council Urges Moldovans To Vote on Referendum

LD0903181591 Moscow TASS in English 1748 GMT 9 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Fyodor Angeliy]

[Text] Kishinev March 9 TASS—The United Council of Labour Collectives of Tiraspol, the second largest city of Moldavia, has issued an appeal denouncing the refusal of the Moldavian parliament to implement a resolution of the Soviet parliament and the presidential decree on holding a countrywide referendum on the problem of the preservation of the union.

The appeal published by DNESTROVSKAYA PRAVDA says that on February 19, 1991 the Moldavian parliament had adopted an "anti-people resolution" about non-holding the referendum on Moldavian territory. "In this way, under the cover of appeals for democracy and the need for protecting the rights of Moldavia's peoples, the republican parliament deprived the peoples of their constitutional right—the right to a free expression of their will."

The decision of the Moldavian parliament does not reflect the will of all the peoples, the appeal says. They can and must express their will by participating in the referendum. The United Council of Labour Collectives of Tiraspol urges all citizens of the republic to take a most active part in the preparation and holding of the referendum and to express their attitude to the preservation of the renovated union of fraternal republics.

Only together, by pooling the efforts of all the peoples of our great motherland, shall we be able to put things in order in the national economy, to overcome the political crisis, to stop inter-ethnic strife, to protect the rights, honour and dignity of individuals irrespective of their nationality, the appeal stresses.

Mikhailo Repchinsky, first deputy head of the Ukrainian Cultural Society in Moldavia (a public organisation, which is working for the national revival of Ukrainians living in Moldavia) said in an interview that the society "believes that it is not expedient to hold a countrywide referendum," the MOLDOVA-PRESS news agency reports.

Moldova's Snegur Opposes Signing Union Treaty

LD1003165391 Moscow TASS in English 1622 GMT 10 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Fyodor Angeliy]

[Text] Kishinev March 10 TASS—President Mircha Snegur of Moldavia [Moldova] spoke against the national referendum on the future of the Soviet Union scheduled for March 17.

He was speaking on Saturday at a meeting of deputies and the leaders of industrial and agricultural enterprises of the Sorokskiy district. Snegur told the audience that Moldavia stood to lose "absolutely nothing if it does not sign the Union treaty".

However, according to economists of the Ukrainian Center for the Study of Productive Forces, the secession of Moldavia from the Union may result in the eruption of inter-ethnic conflicts within the republic and on its borders.

Their study is published in the YAROK weekly published in Tiraspol. Economists say that the move will certainly worsen the economic situation in the republic by disrupting the network of economic ties and the single market.

10,000 in Kishinev Protest Union Referendum

LD0903121991 Moscow TASS in English 1159 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Kishinev March 9 TASS—About 10,000 people rallied here on Friday on the occasion of the International Women's Day—March 8. A Moldova press correspondent said women expressed their negative attitude to the national referendum on maintaining the USSR, which is scheduled to be held on March 17.

The rally reflects the socio-political situation that shaped up in the Republic in the run-up to the nationwide referendum. The population of the Republic split into two parts when the Moldovan parliament adopted a decision on February 19, 1991 not to hold a referendum on the territory of the Republic and the Gagauz and Dniester autonomies, the creation of which was announced unconstitutional, passed an opposite decision.

Local governing councils in areas on the left bank of the Dniester, southern areas of Moldova and in the cities of Bendery and Beltsy adopted resolutions to conduct the referendum.

Participants in the rally, including Moldavian President Mircha Snegur, chairman of the Republican legislature Alexandru Moshanu, Prime Minister Mircha Druk, people's deputies of the USSR and representatives of various political parties and public movements in Moldova voiced support for the Moldovan parliament's decision not to hold the March 17 referendum.

The rally adopted a resolution calling for holding accountable those who do not recognise the republican constitution and outlawing them.

Kravchuk Favors Remaining Part of Union

LD0903224591 Moscow World Service in English 2200 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] The chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, has said that his republic must become a member of the renewed Union, where the republics will have genuine sovereignty. Kravchuk dismissed speculations about the Ukraine's secession from the Union as politically and economically naive. However, he said that the Ukraine's economy should not remain in full control of the Union ministries. We must formulate clearly in the Union Treaty the powers of the republic and of the Union authorities, the Ukrainian leader said.

Girenko Addresses Ukraine Referendum Conference

PM0703144991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 7 Mar 91 Second Edition p 3

[Report by correspondent M. Odinets: "Before the Referendum"]

[Text] Kiev, 6 Mar—A conference of first secretaries of party oblast committees and leaders of republic ministries and departments on the topic of the upcoming referendum was held at the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee today.

The audience was addressed by S.I. Girenko, member of the CPSU Central Committee Politburo and first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party Central Committee.

Ukrainian Central Referendum Committee Meets

LD0803143391 Kiev International Service in Ukrainian 2200 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpt] A regular meeting of the central republican committee for the referendum on the future of the Soviet Union has taken place. My collegue Serhiy Hubin reports.

[Hubin] The main thing noted at the meeting was that the republic is virtually ready for holding the all-Union referendum and the parallel, by the decision of the national legislature, opinion poll of the people of the Ukraine. The corresponding polling stations have been set up locally, and the composition of their commissions has been approved. The lists of citizens who will take part in these two plebiscites on 17 March have been prepared. Their results will finally determine my countrymen's attitude toward the future of the Soviet Union—whether it must continue as a federation in the future or as a commonwealth of sovereign republics. Vitaliy Boyko, chairman of the central republican commission for the referendum, noted:

[Begin Boyko recording] There will be two questions, two ballots in our referendum. Therefore, to my mind, it is necessary to intensify the explanation of the order of voting, so we do not have the people voting on republican ballot paper and crossing out both yes and no on the Union ballot. [end recording]

[Hubin] At the same time it was noted at the meeting that the members of district and station commissions should under no circumstances exceed their authority when conducting explanatory work among the population. Propaganda in favor of the Union or against it is out of their area. Various public organizations and political parties should be engaged in this. [passage omitted]

Caucasus

Situation in S. Ossetia Worsens

LD0803200991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1735 GMT 8 Mar 91

[TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 8 Mar (TASS)—Despite the holiday, shots have been ringing out and the blood of innocent people has been spilled in South Ossetia. According to information from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of North Ossetia, that has reached the press center of the emergency committee under the chairmanship of the North Ossetia Supreme Soviet today, the situation in South Ossetia has worsened dramatically. There was intensive shooting in Tskhinvali and its environs last night, and inhabitants of the city have been hurt.

According to operational data, in the villages of the Tskhinvali, Karelskiy, Leningorskiy, and Znaurskiy rayons, pickets from the illegal armed formations are continuing to plunder and drive families from their homes. Today, this led to an armed clash in the village of Monastyr, resulting in two Ossetians deaths and one wounded. One of the attacking guerrillas was killed and one wounded.

The economic and food blockade of South Ossetia continues. Tskhinvali is disastrously short of food, medicines, and fuel. No food has reached Tskhinvali for four days because of delays in repairing two bridges and the ringroad that had been blown up. Also still under repair is the water pipeline supplying Tskhinvali, which was put out of action. Obstructions are being cleared from the main road used to carry humanitarian aid to the inhabitants of South Ossetia from the republics, Krays, and oblasts of the North Caucasus and from other regions of the country.

TASS was told at the headquarters of the emergency committee that the flow of refugees into North Ossetia from the Ossetian villages of Georgia has increased. Every day, women, children, and old people are arriving in Vladikavkaz. To date, some 13,000 refugees have been registered, including some 7,000 children. The leadership of the republic is taking urgent measures to house and settle the refugees.

Rally Calls for State of Emergency

LD1003160791 Moscow TASS in English 1550 GMT 10 Mar 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz March 10 TASS—Night-time shooting in Tskhinvali and around the city kept the situation in South Ossetia as tense as ever, TASS was told by a spokesman for the extraordinary committee under the chairman of the North Ossetian Supreme Soviet.

On March 9, Georgian militants ravaged houses on the village of Khetagurovo, killing one Ossetian, the North Ossetian Interior Ministry said. Some Ossetians were wounded in an armed clash in the village of Avnevi of the Znauri district.

On the same day, a multi-thousand rally was held in Tskhinvali. The wives of officers of the USSR Interior troops and Soviet Army units called for an end to bloodshed and for a state of emergency on all South Ossetian territory.

Because road blocks prevent all traffic no food was brought to Tskhinvali last week. Bread is delivered by helicopters. Refugees from remote villages flee south for North Ossetia, escorted by USSR Interior troops.

Nearly 13,000 refugees have already been registered in Vladikavkaz, including almost 7,000 children.

Referendum Expanded in Kirghiz

LD0803153691 Frunze Domestic Service in Russian 1300 GMT 8 Mar 91

[Text] The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan has decreed to include in the ballot for secret voting in the USSR referendum the questions: Do you consider it necessary to retain the USSR as a renewed federation of equal, sovereign republics, in which the human rights and liberties of any nationality will be fully guaranteed?

On the proposal of the Democratic Movement of Kyrgyzstan and other public organizations, the Presidium of the Republic's Supreme Soviet has decided to conduct a poll during the USSR referendum among the people of Kyrgyzstan on the question: Do you agree that the Republic of Kyrgyzstan should be within the composition of a renewed union as an equal, sovereign republic, a state?

Commenting on this decision, Comrade Sherimkulov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, stressed that it was dictated by common sense. We need compromises, not confrontation, noted the head of the Republican parliament, especially because it is a matter of such a serious question as a general referendum.

Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet Session Meets

NC1103100791 Baku Domestic Service in Azeri 1700 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Text] The first session of the 12th convocation of the Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet resumed its work today. The permanent commissions met in the morning. The general assembly meeting began at 1200. The deputies congratulated Azerbaijan Supreme Soviet Chairman El'mira Kafarova on behalf of all women deputies on the occasion of the International Women's Day on 8 March. The session began with a debate on the draft law on the referendum; that is, on the question of Azerbaijan's participation in the USSR referendum.

Deputy Ziyad Samed-zade briefed the meeting on the economic situation in the republic and on the republic's economic relations with the center and other union republics. Deputies Sabir Mamedov, Alekper Kahramanov, Murshid Azimov, Allakhverdi Sadykov, Isa Kamberov, Firuz Mustafayev, Itibar Mamedov, To'fik Kasumov, Kamuran Rakhimov, Ali Sahib Orudzhev, and others delivered speeches. There was disagreement over the question of the republic's participation in the referendum.

President Ayaz Mutalibov addressed the evening session. A vote was then held.

Decides To Vote on Referendum

LD0903105291 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0700 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] Delegates to the first session of the new convocation of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan spent two days discussing the question of the republic's participation in the Union referendum on 17 March. Our correspondent Islam Kuliyev reports:

[Kuliyev] Azerbaijan is living through very tense days. The republic's population is focusing its attention on the first session of the new parliament, where a single question has been under consideration for two days: participation in the USSR referendum on the preservation of the Union. Deputies hold divergent views. Supporters of the referendum claim that there could be no political sovereignty without economic independence. To achieve that, it is necessary to consistently improve the economic structure and to raise the republic's economy to a qualitatively new level. In the current economic crisis Azerbaijan finds itself, the destruction of economic ties may entail disastrous consequences. After all, the republic's industry is an organic part of the country's unified national economic complex. Apart from this, most of the food comes to the republic from outside.

Nonparticipation in the referendum may create a new, undesirable situation around the Karabakh conflict, providing a fresh opportunity for the separatist forces that are striving, at all costs, to remove the oblast from the control of Azerbaijan. At the same time, deputies hold categorically that the republic must demand that the Center strictly exercise the powers delegated to it and defend the republic's interests, legitimate rights, and territorial integrity. Those opposed to participation in the Union referendum claim that nonparticipation in it on 17 March does not yet imply the republic's secession from the USSR. The step would simply enable the people of Azerbaijan to express their attitude toward the Union treaty. The draft did not reflect the republic's expectations of the policies of the Center, that has neglected the interests of Azerbaijan over the past few years.

It is actually thought that passions would subside somewhat following the speech at the session by Ayaz Mutalibov, the president of Azerbaijan, but it is not to be. A group of deputies advanced the proposal that a named vote should be held on the issue. Even after that, the auditing commission was unable to begin work. Many deputies rushed to the microphones and started to put forward their arguments for and against, while a group of parliamentarians from the Democratic Bloc of Azerbaijan declared that if the Supreme Soviet decided to hold the referendum a National Council of Azerbaijan would be formed. It was decided to forward the question to the standing commissions for their consideration. If the question of the republic's participation in the Union referendum on 17 March is, nevertheless, resolved positively, the group from the Democratic Bloc stated, they would declare a political hunger strike right there in the Supreme Soviet hall.

Even so, the session passed, by a majority of votes, the decision to hold on the territory of Azerbaijan on 17 March the USSR referendum on the question of preserving the USSR. At that point, the session declared a routine break.

Gamsakhurdia Urges Non-Participation in Poll

LD1003200191 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 1900 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Text] Only those who vote for restoring Georgia's independence as a state at the republican referendum on 31 March will get Georgian citizenship and the right to own land. This was stated today by Georgian Supreme Soviet Chairman Gamsakhurdia in a television broadcast for the non-Georgian population. The voting at the referendum is by secret ballot, which is why ascertaining the loyalty of those who will participate in the referendum will depend on the general results in rayons where there is a high percentage of non-Georgians in the population. This will clarify, said the parliament chairman, who is friend and who is foe. Further, Gamsakhurdia expressed regret that Abkhazia's Armenian population wishes to join the separatist movement of the Abkhaz people and participate in the Soviet referendum on 17 March. He called it double treachery, a betrayal of both Georgia and Armenia, which refused to hold the referendum on the destiny of the union on their territories and organized a referendum of their own. The republican Supreme Soviet chairman called on the non-Georgian population to boycott the all- union referendum.

Central Asia

Uzbek President on Upcoming Referendum

LD0903201191 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1615 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Interview with Islam Abduganiyevich Karimov, president of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, by television correspondent V.V. Vishnevskiy in Tashkent; date not given; program in series "All- Union Referendum 17 March 1991" entitled: "The Union Treaty—the road to Accord"—live or recorded]

[Text] [Vishnevskiy] Hello! Just guess where we are! Rain, snow, and wind! This is the warmest, most southerly city in our country. We are in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, to continue our conversation about the upcoming Union referendum.

Islam Abduganiyevich, how do you, as president of this republic with its millions of people, regard the present situation in the country and the republic?

[Karimov] One can say quite categorically that the situation in the country is tense. I would say that we are on the threshold of very important decisions that will clearly determine the future not only of the whole country, but of each individual republic.

[Vishnevskiy] People are very tired of political instability in the state. What do you think—what could a referendum do for this?

[Karimov] The way I see it, if I understand the significance of a referendum correctly that is, a referendum is required when there is a need to elicit the opinion of each and every citizen, and each and every person and people on some very important—extremely important—political or economic issue. An issue that could have divergent points of view, and there is a need to determine the alignment of forces, and—what is most important—to determine the opinion of the majority. Why? First and foremost to settle on a political policy. To use people's opinions as a basis to decide the future of this or that reform, or serious change that is planned or expected. That is what I see as the purpose of a referendum. If you work on this basis then—and I have never concealed this—from the very outset I have been against a union- wide referendum being held in Uzbekistan. Why? If you consider the phrasing of the referendum question—whether the Union is to exist or not, and in particular whether or not Uzbekistan is to be within the

Union—then I would say that the absolute majority of people are clear on this: we want to be within the Union. Therefore, what need is there for this referendum to be held somewhere where the result is a foregone conclusion? That is, where the opinion of the absolute majority of people is known.

[Vishnevskiy] Yes, but on what conditions is it going to be, or not to be?

[Karimov] The whole issue is this: when the fourth congress of People's Deputies recognized the need to hold this referendum, and the Supreme Soviet defined the formula, I would say there was somewhere here, if I may put it so, an element of haste. The formulation of the question itself was somewhat incorrect. Why? Because if you put the question unequivocally, then the answer is unequivocal too. If at the same time the question contains yet more questions, then this alone creates a precedent and it is difficult well, to predict the consequences or to be sure about these consequences. This is why, while discussing this issue at the Supreme Soviet Presidium, we have come to the conclusion that our opinion about these ballot papers, or rather about the way the question was formulated on these ballot papers, was as follows: alongside the formula defined by the USSR Supreme Soviet, we decided to introduce another ballot paper so that the question should be put in a more precise, more specific, and more unequivocal way. This is approximately how it sounds: Do you agree that Uzbekistan should be, and should remain, within a renewed Union, as a sovereign republic, enjoying equal rights?

[Vishnevskiy] Here is one more significant point: how can you say, to be or not to be, when the Union treaty has not in fact been worked out yet?

[Karmov] I see your point.

[Vishnevskiy] On what conditions will the republics co-exist; how is it going to work?

[Karimov] This is why there is obviously in these questions, in the formulation of the question itself, a certain element of ambiguity, and such doubts are also being voiced in our republic. Well, how do you understand a renewed Union? What does the notion of renewal mean? To what extent will there be no dictate of the administrative system, obviously unacceptable today, in this renewed Union? Most importantly, how will each individual republic see itself within this renewed Union, and to what extent will it receive guarantees of the kind of independence in keeping with the notion of sovereignty, and the notion of a republic enjoying equal rights within the framework of this Union?

[Vishnevskiy] Tell me, please, do you not suspect that relying upon the opinion of the people—I put the opinion of the people in quotation marks, this is something that is always very convenient to refer to—that this opinion of the people, forming the result of the referendum, will give right-wing forces an opportunity?

[Karimov] I understand that today these so-called right- and left-wing forces are, I would say, equally dangerous. The right- wing forces, I think, nevertheless declare and promote the idea of dictatorship in certain places. Likewise, the left-wing forces sometimes improperly call themselves democrats. In recent instances in the life of our country as a whole and in individual areas, we even talk of those democratic goals set in the final analysis also being turned into dictate, and into dictate far more dangerous than the dictate which existed in the totalitarian state. Therefore, when you ask about right-wing forces, if you permit me, I would place them together with the left-wing extremist forces, that are in my view equally dangerous for us. It seems to me that you are right to raise this question. Therefore, we have always been accustomed to speculate on, to parasitize the opinion of the people, and in this respect, such a danger does indeed exist. When we speak of sovereignty, when we speak of a declaration which must without fail be fulfilled—and I want to say that in the case of our repubic, in our declaration, and in the laws we shall adopt in accordance with this declaration—I think we shall succeed in staving off that dangerous path you are asking about here.

To link this general decision with all 15 republics at once would be incorrect; it seems to me that we shall never get to the end. I should simply like to say: Unless we agree today on what is within the framework of those republics prepared to sign this treaty, unless this treaty is open to all the rest, unless we come to this opinion, to this solution, we shall let slip once and for all this opportunity for mutual understanding and the preservation of our Union, that for the moment still remains. Everything that happens in the country is characteristic for us. It is another matter that we adopt forestalling tactics: one of our policy devices or methods, shall we say, is to adopt forestalling tactics, even just for an hour, for just a day, even just for a month, to forestall possible negative manifestations. This is a great art, I think, and today is quite simply the duty of every leader.

Finally, I constantly reiterate that this can all be achieved when there is social and ethnic accord. If we convince people that only peace, only ethnic accord, social accord, tolerance, mutual tolerance, and mutual respect are the basis upon which any reforms can be carried out, upon which any ways can be found, then we must value the stability that we have. Over and over again I consider it my duty to instil this into everyone; without fail I end every speech I make with this, namely: dear comrades, understand corectly that the accord which is today being worked out in our country is the springboard, the base, upon which any plans can be constructed. There will be calm in our country, there will be stability, there will be ethnic peace—we shall achieve everything!

Kirghiz Referendum To Add Second Question

LD0903070991 Moscow Domestic Service in Russian 0430 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] The Presidium of the Kirghiz Supreme Soviet has adopted a decision to include the question formulated by the USSR Supreme Soviet into voting papers for a secret ballot on the day of the nationwide referendum on 17 March. At the same time, at the proposal of the Democratic Movement of Kirghizia and other public organizations, the population of the Republic is also to answer the following question: Do you consent that the Republic of Kirghizia remain within the composition of the renewed Union as a sovereign republic with equal rights, or as a state?

Commenting on this decision, Sherimkulov, chairman of the Kirghiz Supreme Soviet, stressed that it was prompted by common sense. We need compromises and not confrontations—especially when there is a talk about such a serious issue as the referendum, noted the head of the republican parliament.